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LUXEMBOURG
AND THE
GERMAN INVASION
BEFORE AND AFTER

The
Luxembourg
Grey
Book

*Based upon official documents
with a Preface by*

M. JOSEPH BECH

Foreign Minister of the Grand-Duchy

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY
THE GOVERNMENT OF LUXEMBOURG

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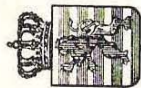
(Luxemburgenses) in rerum tempestate quieti, in obsequio constantes, Deo et regi cari. Stetistis inconcussi, et cum tuti non essetis, tamen securi. Rupes in illis locis vidimus, in pectoribus illis intelleximus. Quati, non moveri, oppugnari, non vinci, vestrum est. Amplius animi, quam montes et rupes valuerunt.

The Luxembourgers.

Steadfast in times of trouble, constant in your loyalties, dear to God and to your King—you have stood firm. Though by no means in safety you remained calm and secure in soul. The rocks in your country we have seen and we know there is a rock foundation in your hearts.

To be shaken and yet not moved, to suffer attacks yet not be overcome, that is your character. Your courage is stronger than your rock or mountains.

Erycius Putaneus (Hendryk van de Putte) 1574–1646.



GOVERNMENT
OF THE
GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INFORMATION
IN THE UNITED STATES



Photo : Lenare

H.R.H. GRAND DUCHESS CHARLOTTE
OF LUXEMBOURG

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with a Preface by

M. JOSEPH BECH

Foreign Minister of the Grand-Duchy

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With 4 Illustrations

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PREFACE

"HAPPY the people whose annals are blank in history books!" If this sentence of Carlyle's were true, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg should be among the least-remembered countries of Europe; for its millenary story occupies but a modest place indeed in books dealing with the historical events of our Continent. Alas, happiness is not its portion to-day, and the fact that this is not better known is due solely to the circumstance that what has happened there, and is happening there to-day, is lost among the tremendous developments which are shaking all humanity.

So the main purpose of this little volume is to make the English-speaking peoples better acquainted with the story of my country's resistance to German invasion and to German attempts at incorporation and annexation.

But the necessity for a certain amount of historical explanation is also indicated, for the question of the international position of the Grand-Duchy has at times been subject to considerable misunderstanding. When war broke out there seemed many who were unaware that Luxembourg was as independent and sovereign a State as all the other European nations, and who failed to understand the survival of such a small country in the centre of the greatest danger-spot of Western Europe—that historical tract of blood-sodden earth, stretching along the Rhine from the Alps to the North Sea, where for twenty centuries rival civilizations have come into conflict and the German and French peoples have fought each other.

The history of Luxembourg is so intricate and so interlocked with that of neighbouring countries and of Europe in general that this small book cannot do full justice to its subject. The reader will find only a terse outline of events. He will, however, be able to realize how in the game of rapacity this little country was a pawn in international intrigues and conventions. Yielded and ceded or sold by the Great Powers, Luxembourg served for centuries to make up the shares after each war, when powerful neighbours bargained over the distribution of territories.

Its independence, lost in 1443 when the country was conquered by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, was nominally restored by the Congress of Vienna. For a time, however, Luxembourg shared the fate of the Belgian provinces of the Netherlands, but the London Treaty of 1839 placed its position on a firmer basis under the guarantee of the Great Powers. Its capital continued to be one of the most powerful fortresses in Europe, a possible bone of contention between rival States, and in 1867, by another Treaty of London, the Powers again intervened, decreeing

the dismantling of the fortress and imposing a status of disarmed neutrality. Its neutrality and independence were again, and finally, placed under their collective guarantee.

These two London treaties emphasize the importance which was attached, in the interest of the peace of Europe, to the maintenance of the independence of this small State. Their consecration of its right to lead its separate existence is of importance.

One of the Luxembourg statesmen who signed the Treaty of 1867 rightly said: "The weak have much fear of being wronged in international politics unless they are supported by public opinion. It is of the utmost importance that their rights should be well established in order that they should obtain this support."

It has too often been said—and especially by German writers wishing to serve their imperialistic thesis—that the Grand-Duchy is only an artificial creation of European diplomacy. This is not true. From the fifteenth century onwards Luxembourg was a distinct principality, enjoying its privileges as such whether under the domination of Burgundy, of Spain, or of Austria. It had nothing in common with the other provinces of the Low Countries beyond the fate of sharing with them foreign domination. As an English historian put it:

"Surrounded by France, Germany, and Belgium, this little country is neither French, Belgian or German, nor a mixture of the three, but has an entirely distinctive physical, social, and ethical character of its own."

The Luxembourg individuality which has found its expression in the Luxembourg State has existed—not without grandeur—through long centuries; it has maintained itself under successive foreign dominations which have completely failed either to destroy or weaken it. When in 1815, 1839, and 1867 the Powers expressly recognized the existence of this individuality by conceding to the Grand-Duchy the exercise of the right of sovereignty, they merely consecrated a historical fact.

The preservation of this individuality throughout the vicissitudes of our history is truly remarkable. Our native language, common to all Luxembourgers, is an outward sign of this individuality. It distinguishes us from our neighbours and gives our people the consciousness of being a distinct community. Although Germanic in origin, the Luxembourg language is as far from modern German as is, for instance, the Dutch language. The area where it is spoken extends to the boundaries of the country as they were when Luxembourg was four times its present size.

If I mention this fact it is with no imperialistic thought of territorial claims in my mind, but to emphasize this language factor as a strong additional proof of an ethnical individuality that gives us an inherent right to independence. Add to this the passionate will of the Luxembourg people to independence which finds expression in our century-old national song: "We want to remain what we are."

According to Renan's famous definition, "The daily renewed will of the people to live together justifies the existence of a nation." This will to live together is clearly shown by the Luxembourgers. It has grown during centuries of an existence full of recollections of common joys and common misfortunes. For each Luxembourger his country is the

echo of the songs and prayers which form the bond between the living and the departed generations.

It may seem pretentious to speak of a people of only 300,000 souls as a nation, but the Luxembourger in his love of his country follows the advice given by Lamartine to a Swiss friend:

"Adore ton pays et ne l'arpenste pas.
Ami, Dieu n'a pas fait les peuples au compas."

The Luxembourg people have never manifested in a more heroic and passionate way their will to remain what they are than since the Germans sought to impose their definition of a nation as "a community of origin and race" by annexing to the Reich our country, which they pretend to be of Teutonic origin. The Luxembourgers will never admit this to be true.

The external policy of the Grand-Duchy since 1867 has been dictated by the status of permanent and disarmed neutrality. When in 1914, in the course of a few hours, the country was invaded and occupied by the Germans, in violation of the treaty they had signed in 1867, all that the Luxembourg Government of the day could do was to protest.

Since the Treaty of Versailles and the admission of the Grand Duchy to the League of Nations, the existence of our neutrality has been the subject of doubts, and has been denied altogether in some quarters. And right from the signing of the 1867 Treaty the obligation of the Great Powers to defend that neutrality in case of aggression has been the subject of controversy. But in spite of this, successive Governments of the Grand-Duchy have remained loyal to the obligations imposed on the country by the 1867 Treaty. This attitude necessitates an explanation.

First of all it is necessary to point out that Luxembourg, before adopting neutrality for its own sake, was neutral by the will of Powers who had their own interest and that of Europe in mind as much, or even more, than that of the small country which they held over the baptismal font. Our independence and our neutrality were to be merged with their own security to form an important element in the European balance of power.

Luxembourg's fidelity to the letter and spirit of this birth certificate of its independence was for the Grand-Duchy a question of life and death. Disarmed and unable to defend itself, Luxembourg lived sheltered by the treaties. How could it—why should it—itself violate so vital a provision?

Even a policy of *self-imposed* neutrality is a very delicate one, as experience shows that it is generally interpreted by one of groups of rival Powers, and often even by both, as being directed against themselves. The situation of a State neutralized for the sake of European peace is still more thankless and fragile.

The slightest relaxation in the policy of neutrality in which Luxembourg may have indulged would have served as a pretext for the German wolf to devour the lamb which it had watched since time immemorial,

accusing it of having troubled the European waters. This would have meant the end of our happy existence before our friends could have had a chance to come to our help—even if circumstances had allowed them to go to war to save little Luxembourg.

Why should we have furnished a pretext for German aggression when our neutrality before May 10th, 1940, did no harm to those who had our sympathy? The more so as our military means were non-existent and we could help them in no way.

Pacta sunt servanda. Luxembourg's loyalty to this saying, which is the strength of the weak and the honour of the powerful, shows up in all its odious bestiality the German crime against its most feeble victim.

The Luxembourg people, officially neutral, were never neutral in mind and heart. They realized, as if by instinct, that the successive German policies—that of Bismarck, springing from Prussian imperialism, that of Bethmann-Hollweg's "scrap of paper," and the philosophical and political conceptions of National Socialism—are identical inasmuch as they are the very negation of the foundations of their existence, the negation of any international life based upon right. The very presence of this happy and prosperous little country side by side with the German colossus, bearing witness by its mere existence to the pre-eminence of right, was a permanent and irritating proof of the iniquity and inanity of the German conception that only might creates happiness and gives to a people the right to live.

During the years preceding the war the Grand Ducal Government never for a moment yielded to the pressure of German diplomatic representatives who asked it to force Press and public opinion to observe an attitude of "moral neutrality" towards the Third Reich. The Press of Luxembourg never ceased to denounce the crimes committed by Nazi Germany against her neighbours, or to manifest the sympathy of the Luxembourg people for the cause of Germany's victims or of the countries which found themselves at war with Hitler.

As the immediate neighbour of Nazi Germany, with our knowledge of its language and its mentality, we were left with no illusions as to its intentions and plans. The more promises we received from the Reich that it would respect our neutrality and the integrity of our territory, the more solemnly these promises were formulated, the more we became convinced that the fatal moment of invasion was approaching.

On May 10th, 1940, Luxembourg neutrality ceased to exist. For three-quarters of a century disarmed neutrality such as imposed by the London Treaty of 1867 had been observed. To some it appeared a paralysing mortgage which reduced the rights of sovereignty, to others as a protective shield for our security. The men responsible for the country's fate simply executed the stipulations of an international treaty never abolished—without regard to their personal opinions concerning the efficacy of the clauses for security which it contained. The duty of neutrality prevented them from pursuing a foreign policy in accordance with any tendencies or preferences of their own. Again a question of right became a question of life.

To-day the Treaty of 1867 belongs to the past. Luxembourg is at war with the Axis Powers. Young Luxembourgers fight in the British, Cana-

dian, American, Free French, and Belgian Armies. In spite of the necessarily limited scope of its present military contribution to the common cause, Luxembourg is recognized as an Ally. And the very fact of this recognition of Europe's smallest independent country as an equal, in spite of the merely symbolic value of its war effort, is a proof of the disinterestedness of the United Nations.

In a "New Order" where Might prevailed over Right, a small nation like my own would have no *raison d'être*. But in the new world which will be constructed after the victory of the Allied arms, President Roosevelt's words: "We believe that any nationality, no matter how small, has the inherent right to its own nationhood," will find their expression.

There are those who still believe that after the war international policies will continue to be expressed in terms of power politics, and that small, weak and defenceless nations will still be a menace to themselves as well as to others. They must not—it has been said—continue to be a temptation to potential aggressors. In other words, the price to be paid for stabilized peace in a new Europe is the disappearance of the small nations.

What a strange new world to fight for, where possible victims of beasts of prey must be sacrificed to prevent their being devoured! There are better ways, I think, of dealing with this problem.

In Europe, after the Allied victory, small countries will no longer be a danger if they consent to take their share in international obligations and sacrifices for the sake of the safety and for the defence of the well-being of the whole. Luxembourg is ready to accept all these duties and obligations to the same extent as other countries will do so.

JOSEPH BECH,
Foreign Minister of Luxembourg.

LONDON, May 10th, 1942.

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Part One

LUXEMBOURG BEFORE THE INVASION

CHAPTER 1

OUTLINE OF LUXEMBOURG HISTORY

A THOUSAND years of the life of the Luxembourg people form an admirable history lesson. It is one which shows the will of a small country, in the very heart of Europe and spared none of its storms, to remain true to itself. The Luxembourgers' love of freedom and independence, their readiness to sacrifice for their ideals, for the maintenance of their old traditions, their loyalty to their princes, respect for their obligations and horror of brutality, have been manifest through the centuries.

Nothing, indeed, could be more natural for a small people between powerful neighbours. But their attitude is not sufficiently explained by their desire for self-preservation and their reluctance to see their territory misused as the battle-field of the rival ambitions of other nations. Because they were small, they had realized, before others, how tragically dreams of world conquest ended. They had fully recognized that, though innocent, they would have to suffer unless the great nations agreed to put right before might.

During the thousand years of their life as a nation, the Luxembourgers have witnessed the rise and fall of many powerful empires. Their own existence started with the disintegration of Charlemagne's vast kingdom. Their first dynasty, descending directly from Charlemagne, established their stronghold Lucelin-burhuc (little fortress) on the ruins of an old castle which probably dated back to Roman times.

The Luxembourgers were temporarily included in many an empire, in that of Charles V (invested with the title of Duke of Luxembourg at his birth) which stretched from the Iberian peninsula to the Low Countries. They lived through the reign of Philip II, heir to the Holy Roman Empire—who married Queen Mary of England. They formed part of the Hapsburg Empire, of the powerful France of the Roi Soleil—Louis XIV—and of the Imperial France of Napoleon. They had been the stepping-stone to many a dream of world conquest up till the time of William II, German Emperor. When his Reich came to an end they

emerged from their trials more united than ever, to preserve their own ancient institutions, which they had then freely enjoyed for a century of independence.

THE FIRST DYNASTY

In April, 963, Count Siegfroid of Ardennes acquired the old castle of Luxembourg and thus became the founder of a dynasty destined to become one of the most powerful of the Middle Ages. By building up around his stronghold one of the Carolingian Lordships he established the county of Luxembourg. He built a feudal castle on the rock, married his daughter Cunegonde to the German Emperor Henry II, and his sons and grandsons sat on the Bavarian throne. In 1136 his male line came to an end, but his blood still prevailed in Luxembourg: Henry, Count of Namur, son of a Luxembourg-born countess, took the succession, thus re-uniting his paternal and maternal inheritances. During the nearly four hundred years of the first dynasty Luxembourg gained largely in territory. The union of Namur, Laroche and Durbuy with Luxembourg brought to the country important elements of Latin civilization. Henry de Namur's daughter, Ermesinde, who first gave the city of Luxembourg its municipal freedom, was one of the country's great rulers. Her reign of fifty-one years was a golden era.

Her descendants made the name of the Luxembourg dynasty illustrious all over Europe; they gave four Emperors to Germany, a line of princes to France, four kings to Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland, Saints to the Roman Catholic Church.

These brilliant achievements of the dynasty meant, however, that the princes deserted the town of Luxembourg for more regal residences abroad. Ever since Henry VII was elected German Emperor and crowned in Rome (his arrival and the hopes it provoked were described by Dante in *De Monarchia*) the castles of Vienna, Prague, and Budapest were the favourite residences of the Luxembourg dynasty. By abdicating their titular claims to the Polish crown they gained the rich province of Silesia for the German Reich.

The Luxembourg rulers of the Holy Roman Empire married French Princesses. Henry VII wedded Margueritte de Brabant and his daughter Mary became the wife of Charles IV of France. His son, John the Blind, the outstanding figure of this period of Luxembourg history, married Beatrice de Bourbon, princess of France, and, loyal ally of the French King, died gloriously at the Battle of Crécy. He went to the assistance of Philip VI, accompanied by his son Charles and five hundred knights of Luxembourg and Bohemia. The Black Prince, moved by his heroism, took the three ostrich feathers from John's helmet and in recognition of his valour adopted his motto: "*Ich Dien*." This has remained the inheritance of the Princes of Wales to this day.

His son Charles, another German emperor, chose Princess Blanche of France, sister of the King, to be his wife. He raised the status of Luxembourg from a County to a Duchy and gave it to his younger brother

Wenceslas, who, marrying Jeanne, heiress of Brabant and Limbourg, introduced at home the etiquette of the French Court. Wenceslas and Jeanne granted the charter known as the "*Joyeuse entrée*" and under its first Duke Luxembourg reached its peak of expansion. It was four times as large as the present-day Grand-Duchy; at that time the Luxembourg Emperor ruled a territory stretching from the mouth of the Scheldt to the Eastern Carpathians. At Wenceslas's death, 1383, Jeanne was left with her Duchy reaching from Metz and Malmédy to the Sarre, Meuse, and Sedan, but with no direct heir. In times to come the Duchy was constantly changing hands, pawned, mortgaged; taking the place of a Royal dowry, it belonged to one ruling house after another.

UNDER FOREIGN DOMINATION

Margaret of Flanders, wife of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, their son Anthony and his wife, Elizabeth of Bohemia, were among the rulers of the Duchy. Anthony was killed at the battle of Agincourt. In 1442, Philip of Burgundy acquired the Duchy and made French the official and administrative language of the country. From Philip le Bon the Duchy went to Charles le Téméraire, whose only daughter, Mary of Burgundy, left Luxembourg to Philip le Beau. The Duchy finally reverted to Charles V, grandson of Philip's wife, Jeanne la Folle, heiress of Castille and Aragon.

Under foreign domination the Luxembourgers never forgot their ancient independence, and they never merged entirely into another nation; the Duchy remained separate and intact. Great kings never forgot to mention separately their modest title of Duke of Luxembourg. During the whole period of Hapsburg rule, although attached to the Low Provinces by political and administrative ties, Luxembourg had its own Governor and remained in a state of semi-independence; a fact the more remarkable as this period of foreign domination stretched over several centuries. After the Dukes of Burgundy, 1443-1506, came the House of Spain, 1506-1714, its rule only interrupted by a French occupation lasting from 1684 to 1697.

During the Spanish domination the Duchy was often the battlefield of contending armies, and during this period France acquired (by the treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659) an important portion of Luxembourg territory. The geographical situation of the town of Luxembourg has from time immemorial made the rocks and heights an ideal place for a fortress. Vauban had worked here and achieved fame by his fortifications. But the peaceful inhabitants of the town were not over-proud of this stronghold, constantly a subject of rivalry and martial ambitions.

By the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, Austria became the owner of this country and its fortress town. Henceforth, Luxembourg, preserving its title of Duchy, formed a part of what was known as the "Austrian Netherlands."

The French revolutionary army, marching in in 1794, marked the beginning of a fresh period of disturbance, which, however, led eventually to a new era of complete independence.

By the treaty of Campo Formio, in 1797, Austria yielded the Duchy to France. The Luxembourgers witnessed the rise and fall of Napoleon. By the treaty of Vienna in 1815, after the defeat of the Emperor, they had to surrender further parts of their territories to Prussia, who gained from them all the land east of the Moselle, Sûre, and Our rivers. As a consolation for these territorial losses Luxembourg gained the title of Grand-Duchy and the legal status of an independent State. The King of Holland was made Grand Duke of Luxembourg.

NEW INDEPENDENCE

Although by the treaty of Vienna the Grand-Duchy was connected to Holland by personal ties only, William I of Holland, King and Grand Duke, treated Luxembourg as a province of the Netherlands.

In 1830 Belgium revolted against the king, and obtained its independence. Many Luxembourgers were in sympathy with the Belgians. The capital, however, remained loyal to the Orange-Nassau dynasty, and not until the final settlement between Holland and Belgium did the full independence of Luxembourg become a fact.

A treaty was concluded in London on April 19th, 1839, by which the Great Powers solemnly guaranteed the political independence and territorial integrity of the Grand-Duchy. The King of Holland remained Grand Duke, but the union between the two countries was now purely personal. Part of the Grand-Duchy was given to Belgium and formed henceforth the Belgian province of Luxembourg. The Grand-Duchy remained a member of the German Confederation, which it had had to join by the stipulations of the treaty of Vienna in 1815, but in 1842 it was forced by Prussia into a customs union.

The fortress, still one of Europe's most formidable citadels, attracted the ambitions both of Napoleon III and of Bismarck. A Prussian garrison had been maintained at Luxembourg in accordance with its membership of the German Confederation. When Prussia attacked Austria in 1866, the victory of Sadowa put an end to this federation. The Grand-Duchy did not join the new North-German Confederation under Prussian leadership and achieved, by separating its fate from that of North Germany, another important step towards total independence.

Napoleon III felt the threat of Prussia's ever-growing expansion. He considered also that he should have some compensation for his non-intervention in the war of 1866, when Prussia became definitely a Great Power. He tried to acquire the Grand-Duchy, where the presence of a Prussian garrison, illegally maintained, added to his growing fears, but his plans failed. The King-Grand Duke's younger brother, Prince Henry of the Netherlands—who had been delegated to Luxembourg as



German troops, using rubber boats for a pontoon bridge, cross the Moselle river into Luxembourg on May 10, 1940

the King's Lieutenant-General—became himself the most ardent advocate of the maintenance of Luxembourg's independence.

Bismarck knew that handing over the Grand-Duchy to Napoleon would only hasten the war between France and Prussia, for which he wished to be fully prepared and in possession of a military machine increased in size by soldiers recruited from his newly-won territories. At a conference of the Great Powers in London on May 7th, 1867, he declared himself willing, however, to withdraw the Prussian garrison from Luxembourg on condition that the fortress should be destroyed and the town completely demilitarized. All the Powers concurred and an agreement was reached in a few days.

By this treaty the town of Luxembourg was deprived of its military significance—the garrison withdrawn, the fortress destroyed, the neutrality of the Grand-Duchy was declared perpetual, and its independence and territorial integrity guaranteed collectively by Britain, France, Austria, Italy, Russia and Prussia.

When a few years later war broke out between France and Prussia, both Powers kept their guarantee—and Luxembourg was spared the horrors of this campaign.

Up till 1890 Luxembourg remained under the rule of the Orange-Nassau dynasty. When in this year King-Grand Duke William III died without male issue, the stipulations of the Nassau Family Pact dating from 1783 were carried out. The elder, Walramian, branch of the family, represented by the Duke Adolphus of Nassau, succeeded to the Luxembourg throne, and with his accession the last ties with the Dutch kingdom were severed.

Under the rule of the Orange (1815–90) the prosperity of Luxembourg had steadily increased. During the reigns of Grand Duke Adolphus (1890–1905) and of his son, William IV (1905–12), a notable evolution took place in the economic situation of Luxembourg. Industrialization, aided by the increasing output of the rich mines of the country, developed considerably in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This continued under Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide, who, after her father's death without male issue, succeeded to the throne. But only a short while after her accession the young ruler was faced with German violation of her country's neutrality and an occupation which lasted from 1914 to 1918. Luxembourg, after solemn protests both from the Sovereign and the Government, awaited her hour of liberation, keeping strictly to the obligations of her neutrality and resisting all German attempts to force the country into any sort of collaboration with the invader.

The American expeditionary force, headed by General Pershing, ended this period of trial in November, 1918. The Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide abdicated and was succeeded by her sister Charlotte in 1919. A referendum taken in Luxembourg to decide on the political future of the country resulted in a large majority (of almost 80 per cent) in favour of the continuation of an independent Luxembourg under the ruling dynasty. Grand Duchess Charlotte married Prince Felix of Bourbon-Parme. There are six children of this marriage.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE
GRAND DUCHY BEFORE THE INVASION*The Luxembourg Constitution and Government*

THE Constitution now in force was proclaimed on October 17th, 1868. In 1919 some important changes were introduced. The Constituent Assembly decided that the Sovereign Power resided in the Nation (Article 32). All secret treaties were to be abolished (Article 37). Deputies were to be elected on the basis of universal suffrage, pure and simple, by scrutiny of lists according to the rules of proportional representation (Article 52).

The Chamber of Deputies consists of fifty-five members.

The Head of the State takes part in the legislative power and exercises the executive power. The Constitution leaves to the Sovereign the right to organize the government, which consists of a Minister of State, President of the Government, and of at least three Ministers. Besides the Government there is a Council of State. It deliberates on proposed laws and bills, and amendments which might be proposed; it also gives administrative decisions and expresses its opinion on any other question referred to it by the Grand Duchess or by the Government. The Council of State is composed of fifteen members chosen for life by the Sovereign, who selects each year a President from their number.

The Sovereign sanctions and promulgates laws, which must be countersigned by the Government.

A law was passed on September 28th, 1938, empowering the Government to take "any steps required to preserve the safety of the State and its inhabitants." On August 29th, 1939, the eve of the invasion of Poland, the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies met to extend the time limit of the 1938 law of full powers, this time indefinitely.

When on May 10th, 1940, the Grand Duchess and her Government withdrew before the advancing German troops these two laws, which had been carried unanimously and without a single abstention, made their position outside their national territory legally unimpeachable.

Luxembourg Territory and Population

Luxembourg has an area of 999 square miles and a population of 300,000. The Luxembourgers are Roman Catholics, except for 3,200 Protestants and 3,150 Jews; 450 belonged to other sects and 5,650 are without religion or have given no indication on the subject.

The capital, Luxembourg, has 58,000 inhabitants.
The centre of the mining district, Esch-sur-Alzette, has 27,500 inhabitants.

Professional Life in Luxembourg

1. Agriculture : Agriculture, once the chief occupation of almost the entire population of the Grand-Duchy, is still the means of livelihood of at least a third of the Luxembourg people. Cultivation is not limited to a few products and its standards are very high. 85 per cent of agricultural property is owned by smallholders possessing from ten to fifty acres of land.¹

2. Industry : The mining and metallurgic industries are by far the most important of the country. Luxembourg ranks as a steel-producing country immediately after Britain, U.S.A., Germany, France, Russia, and Belgium.²

Customs Union

After the first World War the Customs Union with Germany came to an end. Negotiations with Belgium were started and an agreement was reached on December 22nd, 1921. The Chamber of Deputies at Luxembourg passed the Bill for an economic union with Belgium. This agreement, which is for a period of fifty years, provided for the disappearance of the customs barrier between the two countries and the use of Belgian currency in the Grand-Duchy alongside the Luxembourg currency. The parity of the Luxembourg franc before the new invasion was fixed at 1 Luxembourg franc equalling 1.25 Belgian franc.

¹ In 1938, 398,000 acres were under cultivation.

In 1934 the harvest of—

Wheat was valued at	31,284,000 frs.
Rye "	10,675,000 "
Oats "	36,442,000 "
Beetroot "	24,720,000 "
Potatoes "	59,000,000 "
Fruit "	15,000,000 "

There are also large harvests of many other vegetables and plants and a wine production of some importance.

Luxembourg is able to produce three-quarters of her needs and absorbs nine-tenths of her own agricultural produce.

² The following table shows production and value during five years :

	Iron Ore	Pig Iron	Steel
1934 . . .	3,833,847 tons	2,000,193 tons	1,932,387 tons
1935 . . .	3,133,808 "	1,872,378 "	1,836,836 "
1936 . . .	4,895,992 "	1,986,605 "	1,981,054 "
1937 . . .	7,766,254 "	2,512,507 "	2,510,234 "
1938 . . .	5,140,632 "	1,550,703 "	1,436,506 "

The number of blast furnaces in 1938 was thirty-five. There were seven steel works. The three big companies, "Arbed-Terres Rouges," "Hadir," and "Rodange-Ougrée," represent the bulk of Luxembourg steel industry. In December, 1938, the number of workers in the different industries of the Grand-Duchy was 33,470, of which the mining and metallurgic industries alone employed 20,000.

There is also an extensive industry of tanning, *faïence*, and earthenware goods (founded in 1775), and of textile and alimentary products.

In 1937 industrial exports from Luxembourg were valued at 1,875,000,000 francs, of which Belgium took 25 per cent, Germany 20 per cent, Asia and South America together 20 per cent. Great Britain 7 per cent.

After the initial difficulties of the change of economic policy—Luxembourg had lived for three-quarters of a century under the protectionist regime of the customs union with Germany—this new economic union with Belgium had, up to the outbreak of the new World War, shown good results.

Posts, Communications, Railways

In 1938 there were 1,301 miles of State roads and 1,343 miles of local roads. In 1937 there were 339 miles of railway (249 miles of normal gauge and 90 miles secondary gauge), 796 miles of telegraph lines, with 2,016 miles of wire and 466 telegraph offices. There were also 52 telephone systems with 1,485 miles of line and 35,337 miles of wire.

In 1937 there were 144 post offices, through which there passed: Inland mail, 5,128,600 letters and post cards, 24,690,000 pieces of printed matter and newspapers, and 16,940,000 pieces of foreign mail matter.

Radio-Luxembourg, the national broadcasting station, founded in 1931, was one of the most powerful and modern in Europe. At the beginning of the second World War this station was closed down by order of the Government. The Germans have taken it over, and after the necessary repairs are using it for their own purposes.

There is no doubt that the Grand-Duchy was one of the happiest countries of the continent of Europe, and enjoyed, under a democratic regime, all the advantages of a wise and social-minded administration.

During the nineteenth century Luxembourg had undergone a transformation from an exclusively agricultural State to one in which industry predominated. In consequence the vast majority of the population was employed or associated with the highly developed iron and steel industry.

Because of this the Labour movement gained in importance and its representatives took their place in the Government. Social conditions were very satisfactory, standards of living were high, the whole population prospered under a regime which had extended the principles of democracy from the political to the social sphere. There were no under-privileged sections of the population, no violent contrasts between rich and poor. All those who were willing to work earned a fair living and those who were unable to support themselves were helped by the State, the local relief institutions and organized private charity.

The social insurance scheme, introduced at the beginning of the century, was highly developed. Unemployment, at the outbreak of the present war, was practically non-existent in Luxembourg. Paid holidays for the workers had been introduced earlier than in any other nation. The working day was eight hours. Old age pensions, unemployment relief, and other social institutions were organized on modern lines. Utter destitution was unknown. Slums had been abolished, and by means of special legislation and a low credit system, the Government encouraged each worker to keep his own garden and helped him to become the owner of his own home.

The interests of the several branches of national economic life were safeguarded by representative organizations such as the Chamber of

Commerce and the Chamber of Labour. Trade and industry were represented within the Chamber of Commerce, farmers and wine growers within the Chamber of Agriculture, all independent artisans and craftsmen within the Chamber of Artisans. Salaried employees had two organizations of their own, the Chamber of Private Employees, and the Chamber of Labour. These Chambers were all elected by the men and women they represented and were financed by special compulsory contributions. Together they made up a new and comprehensive system of free and direct professional representation. The Government consulted the various Chambers each time their interests were involved in impending legislation. The Chambers had the right to put forward their own suggestions and proposals for the State budget. As far as possible and as far as was compatible with the general interest of the public, these suggestions were taken into consideration by Parliament and Government.

"Social achievements in the Luxembourg of 1940," said a trade union leader, "were not the sudden outcome of violence or revolution, but the result of a long and steady effort, based upon the needs to be satisfied, practical possibilities and the principles of democracy. Naturally, all the social laws did not immediately meet with universal approval. Some of them even gave rise to resentment and strife. In the end, however, an agreement was always reached. The keystone of the whole system was the social insurance scheme, whose membership was compulsory to all workers. The State bore part of the administrative expenses. Child labour was prohibited. Night employment of women and young people was also forbidden. All social problems of any real importance had been taken in hand by the Luxembourg administration and the best possible solutions provided. Each of the country's successive Governments had respected the Luxembourg people's devotion to justice and democracy and their determination to preserve the liberties, privileges and security they had conquered. Grand Duchess Charlotte, known for her social consciousness, has always displayed the greatest interest in every problem dealing with the welfare of her people and has steadfastly supported every progressive measure of her country."

CHAPTER 3

ORIGINS, EDUCATION, LANGUAGE

NO people, in the heart of Europe, at the cross-roads of so many invasions, can escape the impact of all the nations who have swept across their territories. The Luxembourgers are proud of their country, their age-old traditions, their modern social achievements, their memorable past. But they neither wished to be considered as a superior race nor to be included in the *Herrenvolk*.

They were not ashamed of their origins. One of their well-known writers said: "We do not discuss our German origins. But the fact of having a common ancestry with a distant cousin does not necessarily mean that his fate and situation are similar, nor that the one wants to share the other's fortunes."

The application of German racial theories is nowhere more out of place than in this small country where for thousands of years Celtic and German blood have mixed.

During almost the whole of the last century, when the German neighbour developed the theory of the rights of the German race, Luxembourg made it perfectly clear that the Grand-Duchy would be no party to such a system of endless expansion. Their old popular anthem, *Mir wölle bleiwe wat mer sin* (We want to remain what we are!), was more and more often sung with a slightly changed refrain: "We do not want to become Prussians!"

The Luxembourgers' cultural and intellectual affinities with France had always been of a more intimate character than those with their Prussian neighbours. When they went abroad, the Luxembourgers did not often choose Germany. To broaden their outlook, artisans as well as peasants made a two years' journey through France. In the last years before the new World War, when the danger of the German invasion became more concrete and threatening, the people of Luxembourg drew even closer to France. The more so as they had no reason to fear a French move to annex them and to destroy what they cherished most dearly—their independence and their traditions.

"It was," said the Luxembourg Prime Minister, "as if Luxembourg had made a shield of her Francophile sympathies and kept them on parade. Popular sentiment was thoroughly anti-Prussian."

Bismarck versus Hitler

It is quite interesting to hear a German voice on this subject and no lesser one than Bismarck's. The Iron Chancellor's views on Luxembourg

are included in an article in his official newspaper, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, of April 26th, 1867, shortly before the conclusion of the London agreement:

"Luxembourg"—this article runs—"has never been a German province. Constituting an integral part of the Low Countries, it did not share the interests and was not involved in the destinies of Germany. Its inclusion, in 1815, or rather in 1839, in the German Confederation does not imply that it then became a German province, any more than the admission to the Confederation of the Dutch province of Limburg and the Austrian-Italian city of Trieste caused them to become parts of Germany.

"The feudal suzerainty exercised in ancient times by Germany is also irrelevant. This suzerainty extended over a great part of Italy, over Switzerland, over the Kingdom of Arles, and over almost all the provinces of Holland and Belgium. But for all that, Germany would have no more right to claim one of those countries on the ground that it had formerly been a German province than France could have to claim Flanders.

"The elevation of Count Henry to the Imperial dignity has been wrongly regarded as a proof of the German nationality of Luxembourg. The law of the Empire did not require the Sovereign to be chosen solely from among German princes. Only a few years previously the imperial crown had been bestowed upon King Alphonso of Castille and Prince Richard of Cornwall. The motive of Henry's election should be sought rather in the fact that his domain was a small one.

"Community of origin is not the only basis upon which States are built. The sentiment of nationality derived from identity of interests and religion and fortified by memories of the same destiny and the same vicissitudes: that is the true principle. France can lay no claim to Luxembourg and the idea of annexation to France is repugnant to the population. But, as Count Bismarck admits himself, Luxembourg is equally unsympathetic to Germany, and the North German Confederation, having no legal title to the country, could not very well incorporate it by violence."

Bilingualism

French and German are spoken in Luxembourg. The bilingual situation is as old as the Grand-Duchy itself. The influences of the two big neighbour countries are apparent in all the branches of Luxembourg life. But the inhabitants of this small country have always made it clear that they wish neither to become French nor German. Having something of each race in their blood and their speech, they were not only willing to take advantage of the achievements of their neighbours, but also to form a cultural bridge between the two parts of Charlemagne's empire which had never, since those remote times when Luxembourg's life as an independent community started, been able to live at peace with one another.

Since the earliest days of its national existence both languages were spoken. Charters, written in Latin up to the thirteenth century, were later generally worded in French. Under John the Blind, for instance, only seventy charters were written in German, whilst more than two hundred and eighty were drawn up in French. Sovereigns, closely related to the Royal House of France, chose French, and for four centuries, up to the present day, French has remained the official language of the country. But during the nineteenth century "Letzeburgesch," the homely dialect, became the written and printed language of many writers and poets. It is also true that this patois has always been the language of the people. "Letzeburgesch," almost incomprehensible for the German, certainly existed before the German language of to-day—"Hoch-Deutsch." Based upon old Teutonic origins, it has extensively borrowed from the Celtic, Roman and French tongues. German and French roots have been phonetically altered throughout the centuries. Beyond Luxembourg's own frontiers this language is spoken in the German, Belgian, and French border regions which in the course of Europe's history have been separated from the Grand-Duchy proper. Beyond these frontier regions neither Germans nor Frenchmen understand the Luxembourg tongue. But in spite of their fondness for their mother-language and the fact that they resort to it in everyday use—from the top of the social ladder to the bottom—the people of Luxembourg have realized that their language is not widespread enough to serve as the linguistic vehicle of general culture. As "Letzeburgesch" is closer to German and German is easier understood by the mass of the people, newspapers were mostly printed in German, but they always showed a certain degree of bilingualism by printing some French articles or the *feuilleton* in the original language. On the other hand, French always remained the official, legislative, administrative, and judicial language. The people are used to bilingualism, a state of affairs which has never given rise to the least difficulty. On the contrary, Luxembourgers appreciate the bilingual character of their country, because quite often it gives them a decided advantage over others who are not as well equipped linguistically as they are.

Education

Since the year 1080, when there existed in Luxembourg only one school—the famous Munster Abbatial school—steady progress has been made and educational and cultural prospects have greatly changed. The teaching of elementary subjects in the State schools has been standardized for the last hundred years. They included religion, French, German and mathematics. For the last seventy-five years education has been compulsory for all children between the ages of six and thirteen. Rich and poor alike attend the same elementary schools. This has proved of great importance in the formation of a true democratic spirit, which is noticeable in all the public and administrative life of the Grand-Duchy. After seven years in the primary schools all children under sixteen not

continuing their studies had a further obligatory two years at an evening school.¹

The standard of education in Luxembourg was at least as high as that of her great neighbour countries. Illiteracy has been, for more than a century, entirely unknown in the Grand-Duchy.

Luxembourg has found an original answer to the question of academic studies. The country has no university and its young people who choose a profession requiring academic studies are thus obliged to attend foreign universities. Since the law permitted them to go to a university of their own choosing, one could find Luxembourg students in French, German, Belgian, English and Swiss institutions. The French and Belgian universities, however, had always held the greatest attraction for Luxembourg students.

Most of Luxembourg's future lawyers, philologists, and medical men frequently switched from one institution to another. Rarely did they finish their studies without having followed courses in the universities of at least two different countries. This broadened their intellectual and moral outlook. They learned to know, compare, and judge the advantages and disadvantages of various national cultures. But what was even of more value was that this sort of academic education—acquired in one or several foreign universities—saved young Luxembourg intellectuals from the danger of going through life with the kind of Main Street attitude that is likely to arise from living in a small community. It placed them in a larger *milieu*, in direct contact with the new waves of ideas which periodically flow forth from the human mind. Thus they acquired a European outlook.

University careers, however, are started and terminated in the Grand-Duchy. There are lectures for the first-year studies, and before taking up one of the liberal professions (legal, medical, or educational) the candidate who has attended a university abroad has to pass his final examinations before a jury appointed by the State.

Luxembourg seen by great writers and artists

One of the most sympathetic aspects of the patriotism of the Luxembourgers is their ardent love for what one could call the *visage de sa petite patrie*. Hundreds of thousands of emigrants to the United States of America have taken in their hearts a picture of their native Luxembourg, of the valleys and mountains, the streams and rivers of their Fatherland. An enthusiastic British traveller has written: "Luxembourg, though one of the smallest European countries, is one of the most beautiful. On the way to Switzerland and Italy, it is scarcely known to the European traveller; the seeker after natural beauties has long regarded it as the Cinderella of the three Ardenne sisters. But well may

¹ In 1936-7 the primary schools had 1,100 teachers. There were twenty-two higher elementary schools, three classical schools, two commercial and industrial colleges, two girls' colleges, four technical schools, two teachers' training colleges, a mining school, a college of agriculture, and an academy of music.

The primary schools, although run by the communes, were all under State control, and the State paid two-thirds of the costs. Approximately 15 per cent of the entire State budget was destined for educational purposes.

the two others be jealous of the dowry Mother Nature gave to the little Duchy. Neither the Belgian nor the French Ardennes have such a rich and lovely succession of mountain and valley, of forests and bush, of plain and gorge and river. No other little land produces such continual and varying delight for the wanderer. There, Nature's great tome is condensed to a pocket volume; there are her 'Selected Works.' "

Famous men have stayed in Luxembourg and many among them have sung her praises. Louis XIV brought Racine with him when he took up residence in the palace in 1687, where more than a century later Napoleon also stayed. Goethe had visited Luxembourg and in his *Memoirs* he speaks of its grandeur, its gravity and its grace. "Luxembourg," he concludes, "resembles nothing but itself!"

The poet also made a series of sketches and views of Vauban's famous fortifications and of the beautiful "Monk's Vale," which he called "a pledge of peace and rest, though every look upwards recalls war, violence, and ruin!"

A great English artist, Turner, did some of his famous sketches in Luxembourg, where the picturesque town and the old fortress greatly attracted him. His water-colours give a magnificent idea of the atmosphere of this town, of which an American writer said: "It has the pose and poise of Gibraltar, the bridge and spire profile of Bruges, the flowered beauty of Paris, the historical charm of Brussels, and the mystery of a temple city of the Orient. No capital in the world is quite like Luxembourg City!"

The great French poet, Victor Hugo, who spent some of his years of exile in the Grand-Duchy, loved the country dearly and returned there repeatedly. The influence which the charming town of Vianden and its gorgeous scenery had upon him may easily be traced in his work.

The dancing procession of Echternach is world famous. On Whit-Tuesday twenty thousand pilgrims, and probably as many spectators, flock to the tomb of St. Willibrord, the Englishman from the Humber who brought Christianity to Luxembourg. Many famous men have visited this grave. The pilgrims proceed to the Basilica, taking three dancing steps forward and two backwards, until in four hours they reach the tomb of the Saint, three-quarters of a mile from where they started.

There are many other beautiful towns and castles, chapels, and cathedrals throughout the country, of which much might be written. But Echternach, with its procession, seems a perfect symbol of the Luxembourgers' tenacity of purpose, of his ceaseless struggle, against setbacks, for what he values most highly: his independence and his traditions.

Part Two

THE GERMAN INVASION

CHAPTER 4

LUXEMBOURG NEUTRALITY AND ITS FIRST VIOLATION

THE first article of the *Luxembourg Constitution* proclaims the independence, indivisibility, and permanent neutrality of the State. This constitution, proclaimed on October 17th, 1868, is based, inasmuch as it is concerned with the international statute of the Grand-Duchy, upon the Treaty of London, signed on May 11th, 1867, and approved by law.

Its second article runs as follows:

"The Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, within the limits determined by the act annexed to the treaties of April 19th, 1839, under the guarantee of the Courts of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia, shall henceforth form a perpetually neutral State. It shall be bound to observe the same neutrality towards all other States. The high contracting powers engage to respect the principles of neutrality stipulated by the present article. That principle is and remains placed under the sanction of the collective guarantee of the powers signing parties to the present treaty, with the exception of Belgium, which is itself a neutral State."

The German Reich, succeeding Prussia after the war of 1870-71, formally recognized and accepted for her part the liabilities of the Prussian signature.

When in 1914, in spite of the treaties signed by Germany, the neutrality of Luxembourg was violated by the German army of invasion and occupation, the Sovereign and Government of Luxembourg strongly protested and maintained this attitude during the four years of military occupation. The German Chancellor, von Bethmann-Hollweg, in his famous "scraps of paper" speech at the outbreak of the war, made before the Reichstag a hypocritical declaration: "The protest of the Luxembourg is fully justified and Germany will undertake full reparation of the committed injustice as soon as her military purposes are fulfilled."

On many occasions during the first World War the Luxembourg Government reaffirmed the country's wish to adhere to the neutrality

unilaterally violated by her German neighbours. Thus they refused to deliver into the hands of the occupying Powers British and French airmen who had made forced landings on Luxembourg territory although strong pressure was brought to bear upon them by the invader. In an official Grey Book published by the Luxembourg Foreign Ministry in 1919 more examples of the Luxembourgers' loyalty to their treaties and of their neutrality were given.

In an English study published in 1915 (by C. P. Sanger and H. T. J. Norton) on "England's guarantee to Belgium and Luxembourg," the authors came to the following conclusion: "Since by the treaty of 1867 Luxembourg is not allowed to have an army, she could not have any duty to resist the passage of German troops. By 1867 it was generally recognized that belligerent troops must not pass through neutral territory—the Hague Convention only confirmed the generally received opinion. Hence Germany, although Luxembourg did not and could not actively resist, broke the treaty of 1867."

Circumstances made it impossible for the signatories of the London Treaty of 1867 to come at once to the rescue of Luxembourg, and the Grand-Duchy had to limit its own efforts to a strict observance of international rules, a daring attitude in the face of ceaseless German pressure. As Luxembourg was silenced by the German military censorship, the Luxembourg Government established a Press and Information Office in Switzerland. Several Luxembourg publications appeared in France giving the views of the Luxembourg Government. Several thousand volunteers from the Grand-Duchy fought for the Allies, and the Luxembourg Government, silenced at home, tried to make its voice heard abroad.

When in November, 1918, victory had been gained by the Allies and an American Expeditionary Force occupied the Grand-Duchy, General Pershing, its commander, declared, in proclaiming the liberation of the country, that the Americans would strictly adhere to the principles of international law. He said on November 21st, 1918:

"After four years of violation the territory of the Grand-Duchy is now happily liberated. The termination of the German occupation has been effected by the American and Allied armies as one of the objects of the present Armistice. The American troops have come into the Grand-Duchy as friends and will act strictly in accordance with international law. Their presence, which will not be prolonged for more than is absolutely necessary, will not be a burden to you. The functions of your Government and of your Constitution will in no way be encumbered."

The French Marshal Foch, who arrived at Luxembourg only a few days later, was pleased to say that he was perfectly well aware of the real sentiments of the Luxembourgers towards the Allies during the occupation.

There was, however, at the time of the Armistice some doubt as to the attitude which would eventually be adopted by the statesmen of the Entente with regard to the fate of Luxembourg. The Grand-Duchy, not having taken part in the shooting war, had no part in the negotiations

and deliberations leading to the peace treaties. The German army of occupation having been withdrawn, the former state of affairs was restored.

The Treaty of Versailles, to which Luxembourg was no party, included two articles (40 and 41) obliging the Reich to renounce all the benefits deriving from its former agreements with the Grand-Duchy in respect of the customs union and the agreement for the management of the Luxembourg railways. Article 40 also included the following statement: "Germany accepts the abrogation of the state of neutrality of the Grand-Duchy and adheres beforehand to all the international arrangements concluded by the Allies and associated Powers concerning the Grand Duchy."

Actually no such international arrangements as envisaged were reached, either at that or any other time.

The Luxembourg Government always argued that for them the Treaty of London of 1867 was still in existence, they having respected in every way its stipulations, although Germany had violated it unilaterally. No treaty of which the Grand-Duchy itself was one of the signatories could be abrogated without previous consultations with the Luxembourg Government and the other parties to the treaty. The question of Luxembourg independence and any other aspect of her international statute and position were never raised at Versailles and in the peace treaties.

Immediately after the armistice Luxembourg denounced the customs union with Germany in order to leave no doubt as to her attitude. The Luxembourg Government decided, when the independence of the country had been restored, to take a referendum to decide upon the political and economic future of the Grand-Duchy. The people of Luxembourg decided by an overwhelming majority to remain independent under the reigning dynasty, the House of Nassau.

On December 16th, 1920, Luxembourg was admitted by a unanimous vote to the League of Nations. She entered an economic union with Belgium. She concluded a series of treaties of arbitration with all the Great Powers of Europe and the United States of America.

Thus, on the eve of the second invasion, the international statute and the obligations of the Grand-Duchy were clearly defined.

At the time of grave European tension, the end of September, 1938, the Luxembourg delegate to the League of Nations declared in the Assembly: "The Government of Luxembourg has never ceased to affirm that the geographical situation of the country and the complete absence of means of defence oblige the Government to maintain in the League of Nations its traditional policy of neutrality imposed upon the Grand-Duchy by the Treaty of London in the interest of European peace."

By taking up this attitude the Luxembourg Government adhered to the principles so often expressed by the Assembly and the Council of the League, that collaboration with the work of the League must necessarily vary for each individual country with its geographical situation and the special conditions of its armaments.

On April 22nd and 23rd, 1939, the Grand-Duchy celebrated in the

capital the centenary of its independence, restored by the Treaty of London in 1839. All the members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Grand Duchess were present. This occasion, at a moment of so grave an international tension, lent itself in a magnificent way to an expression of the ardent wish of the Luxembourg people to remain what they were. It was one of the ironies of history that the German Führer, Adolf Hitler, who had already contemplated and prepared the invasion of the Grand-Duchy, was the first to offer, on this occasion, his congratulations to Luxembourg's Sovereign and Government. The people manifested their patriotism in an outburst of fervent enthusiasm such as had never been witnessed before in the Grand-Duchy. All the people paraded before the Grand Ducal Palace, to prove their unalterable attachment and devotion to the dynasty, justly regarded as the loyal guardian of the country's liberties.

CHAPTER 5

THE SECOND INVASION

WHEN in August, 1939, war seemed unavoidable the German Minister came to see the Luxembourg Foreign Minister in order to reaffirm the German wish to respect the independence and neutrality of the Grand-Duchy.

An official communiqué was published on this occasion:

"M. Joseph Bech, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, received on Saturday, August 26th, 1939, Herr von Radowitz, German Minister to Luxembourg. The German Minister has stated the attitude of Germany towards the Grand-Duchy should a European war be unavoidable. The Minister has declared that the Reich, taking into consideration the repeatedly manifested will of the Grand Ducal Government to adhere faithfully to its traditional policy of neutrality, is decided to observe in regard to the Grand-Duchy an attitude which in no circumstances will harm the inviolability of the territory of Luxembourg as long as Luxembourg itself observes an attitude of neutrality."

M. Bech, taking note of this declaration, thanked the German Minister for his communication, but did not fail to draw his attention to the precedent of August 1st, 1914, when the German Government of that period justified the occupation of Luxembourg territory by alleging the violation of Luxembourg neutrality by French troops, a fact which proved incorrect. M. Bech added that in these circumstances and because of the precedent the Grand Ducal Government reserved itself the right to consider and to declare at which moment and by which means a possible violation of Luxembourg territory might have taken place. He stated at the same time that the Grand Ducal Government would, in such circumstances, not fail to invoke the stipulations of the international treaties and to inform consequently the guarantor Powers as well as all the other interested Powers of any violation which might have taken place.

The same day the Grand Ducal Government published the following proclamation in the *Memorial* (Official Gazette):

"PROCLAMATION.

"Europe is in a state of alarm. Even though we must continue to hope for the maintenance of peace there is, nevertheless, reason to fear that a conflict between the Powers might reach as far as to our

own frontiers. In this grave hour the Government appeals to everybody to keep calm and to trust in the future of the country.

"Faithful to its traditional policy of neutrality the Government will observe, whatever happens, the strictest neutrality. Every citizen has the imperious duty to help us with all the means at his disposal."

"Only at this cost can the independence and the inviolability of our territory be safeguarded."

"We have the conviction that even in the case of a general conflagration the inviolability of Luxembourg territory will be respected under the condition of the Government's and the citizens' strict fulfilment of their duties as neutrals."

"The duty of everyone is thus clearly traced."

"At this hour when everybody should consecrate himself to his country, the very spirit of national union which has so splendidly manifested itself during the celebration of our independence will unite all citizens in the same devotion to their country."

"LUXEMBOURG, August 27th, 1939."

On August 29th an official communiqué described the French attitude in regard to Luxembourg:

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Bech, has to-day received the Minister of France, M. Cambon, who has informed him of the firm intention of the Government of the Republic to respect the inviolability of the Grand Ducal territory. The French Government will only consider a modification of this attitude in the case of the inviolability not being respected by another Power."

M. Bech thanked the French Minister and informed him of the conversation which had taken place between himself and the German Minister when the latter had come to see him on August 26th for a similar declaration.

The law of full powers for the Grand Duchess, passed in 1938, was extended now, without a time limit, "until a contrary disposition."

* * *

From September 3rd, 1939, to May 10th, 1940, German and French forces, at the very frontiers of Luxembourg, opposed each other in a war of stagnation.

In a Governmental declaration dated September 6th, 1939, it was said:

"The Grand-Duchy reaffirms its determined resolution to observe the strictest neutrality in the conflict which has just broken out in Europe, conforming to its international engagements and its constitution. Consequently, the rules of neutrality in force in the Grand-Duchy and referring to the relations of the Grand-Duchy with foreign Powers must be observed by the authorities and by all those whom they concern."

The Grand-Duchy formed a kind of military no-man's-land between the Maginot line and the Siegfried line; its dangers were all the greater.



German motorized divisions passing through the barricades of a Luxembourg frontier road on May 10, 1940

because of its complete incapacity for self-defence. From the first day of hostilities one of the relatively most active sectors of the front was established in the immediate proximity of the south-east frontier of the Grand-Duchy. Shrapnel rained down on the peaceful villages of the Luxembourg vineyards. The Luxembourg Government completed the existing legislation, to safeguard the exterior and interior safety of the State; regulations were enforced forbidding the preparation and execution of actions hostile to a belligerent power, the organization of a service of propaganda in favour of a belligerent, the formation of a fighting force or the opening of enlistment offices for the services of a belligerent. It was also prohibited to fly over Luxembourg territory. Clearly, any military defence that Luxembourg might have wished to oppose to her powerful neighbours would have resulted in immediate failure. All the same, the Government had constructed along the frontiers a large number of well-planned obstacles. They were increased later when Germany constructed new fortifications on her bank of the Moselle.

About a month before the invasion of May 10th, 1940, the German Minister presented himself at the office of M. Bech to protest against the construction of passive defence work undertaken by the Grand-Ducal Government. M. Bech protested once more against the military preparations and constructions on the German border, which Herr von Radowitz declared to be of importance only for German river traffic on their own part of the Moselle. The Foreign Minister, rather sceptical about his visit, replied: "I should feel so much easier if you could tell me that you are personally convinced that your Government has no intention of violating the neutrality of my country." The German Minister, eluding the question, made no answer.

This attitude of the German representative confirmed the conviction of M. Bech that Germany would, in her own good time, break her engagements and not hesitate, once again, to violate her promises and the rights of her weakest neighbour.

Since November, 1939, the Germans had constructed all along the frontiers military works, *débarcadères* on the Prussian banks of the border rivers, and similar constructions. Everybody in France or Britain, allies and neutrals alike, had thus had the opportunity of learning about the real intentions of Germany, revealed by these preparations. Other information was not lacking, leaving no doubt of German designs.

The Grand-Ducal Government did not hesitate to inform the Governments with whom she maintained traditional friendship of the German preparations and the menace they implied. On the other hand, the facts which had come to its knowledge made it advisable to decide upon what attitude the Sovereign and Government should adopt in case of invasion. The means at the disposal of the Grand-Ducal Government were far too modest to permit the least doubt as to their ineffectiveness. All the same, it undertook everything possible to counteract the menace and follow the development of the aggression being prepared. Besides the obstacles in concrete, the barricades on the bridges and vital points, a system of radiophonic communications and of motorized patrols was created and actually yielded in practice excellent results. The volunteers who

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collaborated in this patriotic defence work deserved the gratitude of the country.

The preparations undertaken by Germany in view of an invasion led to several alerts during the whole winter 1939 to 1940. The events in Scandinavia had profoundly shocked the little country, which, all the same, maintained its calm. German propaganda had no hold on the Luxembourgers, and the Press of every opinion energetically defended its liberty against severe German pressure. Though officially neutral, they were profoundly shocked by the German violation of other people's rights; their hearts and minds were in sympathy with all those, sharing their own ideals of justice and democracy, who were now so cruelly victimized by the Nazis.

On May 9th the Luxembourg Government received from trustworthy sources the information that the attack was imminent. A document, dated April 23rd, 1940, came into their hands in which the Chief Staff Officer of the German Divisional Command gave a detailed instruction to all his subordinate services as to the different strategical points of the Luxembourg territory to which special detachments were to be sent. At this time Germans living in the Grand-Duchy and a few Luxembourgers of Nazi sympathies were ready to strike.

This highly significant document, headed "Secret Command Matter," required special detachments to be sent to ten different railway bridges and road crossings. It continued as follows:

"These special detachments have the duty to hinder minings and destructions, but not to remove barriers. The special detachments wear mufti. They carry arms, but no identity papers. They identify themselves at night by flashing green lights, by day with yellow handkerchiefs.

"Should there be any uncertainty when suspect persons are arrested, these should be brought immediately into the presence of the division branch Ic.

"The existence of these special detachments of the O.K.W. must not be revealed for the time being except by order. But it must be assured that at the receipt of the *mot d'ordre*, every member of the division is informed of the existence and the recognition marks of the special detachments."

There were further instructions for these detachments to be at their places at "zero hour."

This is the text of the actual document:

Der erste Generalstabsoffizier des deutschen Divisions kommandos an die ihm untergeordneten Dienststellen.

Geheime Kommandosache! ss. Art. Abt. 616. Briefb. Nr. 63.40 g.K. O.U., den 23.4.1940. Abschrift. Verfg. I. Panzer-Div. Ic. Nr. 76/40 g.Kdos.v. 18.4.40.

(1). Schon vor y-Uhr befinden sich Sonderkommandos an folgenden Punkten: (a) 2 Mann an Strassenbrücke über die Alzette, hart südl. Ettelbrück; (b) 3 Mann an Eisenbahnbrücke über die

Alzette und Eisenbahnbrücke über die Wark (hart südl. Ettelbrück); (c) 2 Mann an der Strassenbrücke über die Sauer und Eisenbahn am am Ostausgang Ettelbrück; (d) 2 Mann an der Eisenbahnbrücke über die Sauer am Ostausgang Ettelbrück; (e) 2 Mann an der Eisenbahnbrücke über die Strasse Ettelbrück, Diekirch am Ostausgang Ettelbrück; (f) 2 Mann an der Eisenbahnbrücke über die Strasse Ettelbrück, Diekirch (1000 m. ostw. Ostausgang Ettelbrück); (g) 2 Mann an der Eisenbahnbrücke über die Sauer, hart südl. Diekirch; (h) 2 Mann an der Strassenbrücke über die Sauer, hart südl. Diekirch; (i) 4 Mann an der Stahlorsperre Ostausgang Diekirch (Bestehen noch fraglich); (k) 4 Mann an der Stahlorstelle Südausgang Möstroff.

(2). Die Sonderkommandos haben die Aufgabe, Sprengungen und Zerstörungen zu verhindern, nicht aber Sperren zu beseitigen.

(3). Die Sonderkommandos tragen Zivil. Sie führen Waffen, haben aber keinerlei usweispapiere. Sie geben sich zu erkennen: *nachts durch grünes Licht, tags durch gelbes Taschentuch.*

(4). Falls Unklarheiten bei der Festnahme verdächtiger Personen bestehen, so sind sie umgehend der Div. Abt. Ic. vorzuführen.

(5). Das Vorhandensein dieser Sonderkommandos des O.K.W. darf vorläufig nur gem. Bezugsverfügung bekannt gegeben werden. Es muss jedoch gewährleistet sein, dass bei Eingang des Stichwortes jeder Angehörige der Div. über das Vorhandensein und die Erkennungszeichen des Sonderkommandos ins Bild gesetzt wird.

Für die Richtigkeit
der Abschrift
Leutnant u. Adjutant.

Für das Divisionskommando
Der erste Generalstabsoffizier
I.V.
Gez. Unterschrift

This document refers only to the region between Diekirch and Ettelbrück, an area of approximately five square miles. It is certain that similar instructions were issued by the German military authorities with regard to all the other parts of the Grand-Duchy. Although the document reproduced above is the only one which came into the possession of the Luxembourg Government, the existence of other such documents and instructions seems probable in view of the fact that the German technique of attack was the same in other parts of the country.

The period of apprehension and doubt was abruptly brought to an end when the German forces descended on the Grand-Duchy during the night of May 9th to May 10th, 1940.

CHAPTER 6

EVENTS IN LUXEMBOURG ON MAY 10, 1940

IN the early-morning hours of May 10th, the attack started and a German army of invasion, using air-borne troops and parachutists, occupied all the cross-roads and important strategical positions—exactly in the manner indicated in the aforementioned document of the German High Command. These orders had apparently been addressed to members of the regular German Army, dressed in mufti for the occasion and supposed to collaborate with elements of the fifth column already residing in Luxembourg.¹

The Government had already been confidentially informed, shortly before midnight, from an absolutely reliable source, that the Germans of the Grand-Duchy had been instructed to prepare for action.

The alarm was given at all gendarmerie and passive-defence posts. In the town of Luxembourg, automobile controls were organized and sent out to round up and disarm German fifth columnists, as well as to protect public buildings and strategic points in the interior. The economic counsellor of the German Legation (an engineer established for a long time in Luxembourg), as well as the chancellor of the Legation, were questioned by the police. Apparently they had been trying to establish contacts with the fifth column and were using the Legation cars as a means of liaison. But, enjoying diplomatic privileges, they had to be released, as German troops had not yet crossed the frontier.

One of the first events in September 1939 had been the destruction of the Schengen bridge over the Moselle at that vital point where the French, German, and Luxembourg borders meet. It was blown up by the Germans in an engagement with the French. All the bridges leading to Germany had been walked up with narrow passages for pedestrian traffic. A second line of passive defence had been established on all roads leading to Germany. At a distance of little more than a mile from the frontiers zigzag obstacles protected by thick barbed-wire entanglements were set up on both sides of the road. Along the sixty-mile German border nine radio posts were established and, with constantly changing wave-length, were to be used for communication at regular intervals with a central station at the Luxembourg barracks. Even if telephone wires should be cut, the local posts would thus be able to report on the progress of invading forces and to receive orders.

¹ Information has since reached the Luxembourg Government that in April, 1941, on the occasion of a solemn Nazi parade in Esch-sur-Alzette, a number of more than four hundred individuals, residing in Luxembourg, were allowed to wear the uniforms of the National Socialist Party troops as a reward for their participation in the preparation and the execution of the German invasion. Amongst these people were only a few Luxembourgers, whilst most of them were either Germans established in the Grand-Duchy or people of German origin.

From the early morning hours shots were exchanged at the frontiers where Luxembourg gendarmes and soldiers were attacked and some were killed and others wounded. One by one the radio posts were overpowered and silenced by German troops disguised as civilians. The last one to be captured was still sending out news when the Germans rushed up the stairs and broke open the doors to the operating room.

Interned French airmen and imprisoned German deserters were set free. Dawn came at 4 a.m., and with it hundreds and hundreds of planes roaring over the city. They were flying very low, heading for the Belgian and French frontier where they wanted to intercept Luxembourg refugees. Several planes landed in the neighbourhood of the capital, and quite a large force of German troops entered the Grand-Duchy at several points.

The die was cast. For the second time in twenty-five years Germany had broken her solemn vow to respect the inviolability of the territory and the independence of the Grand-Duchy.

Shortly afterwards the Foreign Minister, M. Bech, in the presence of the Prime Minister, M. Dupong, tried to ring up Herr von Radowitz, the German Minister, in order to protest against the entry of the German troops into the Grand-Duchy, but both at the Legation and at his private residence, although the Minister made it clear who was speaking, he was told that the German Minister was not there.

The American Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Platt Waller,² had come to see the Luxembourg Foreign Minister and stayed with him until his departure as a witness of the events taking place in the Grand-Duchy. At 6.30 the members of the Government left by car. On their way to the frontier town of Esch they found at the cross-roads German machine guns in position and German soldiers who had apparently landed by plane. They succeeded in escaping by using side roads and by proceeding in a zigzag manner through the newly established lines of the enemy.

The Grand Duchess, accompanied by her husband, Prince Felix, and her eighty-years-old mother, the Dowager Grand Duchess Marie Anne, had left Colmar Berg castle at the first alert and gone to the capital, where, after consultations with the Ministers, she decided to go to the south of the country, to the frontier town of Rodange, on the French border, to await developments. She had decided to leave the country only when the advance of the German Army left her no other alternative. The Hereditary Grand Duke Jean and two of his sisters—the other Grand-Ducal children being in Brussels—accompanied by an A.D.C., were to wait at another frontier town and not to leave unless the invasion of the Grand-Duchy had become an accomplished fact.

The Grand Duchess was informed that advanced elements of the German Army had reached a point between the nearby towns of Bascharage and Pétange and the German aeroplanes had also landed there.

Before long the landing of German parachutists between Pétange

² The American Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. George Platt Waller, had been the impartial witness and unfailing helpful friend of the Luxembourgers from this night of May 9th, 1940, until his departure in July, 1941, during this most crucial trial of their history. The spontaneous manifestations of gratitude of the Luxembourg population in favour of the envoy of the United States are proof to what extent the Grand-Duchy appreciates the active friendship of America and her representative.

and Rodange was confirmed. The Germans arrived in the locality of Rodange shortly afterwards. A last communication by telephone with the town of Luxembourg showed that the capital, although as yet undisturbed, appeared to be entirely surrounded by German troops.

Between 7.45 and 8 a.m. a Luxembourg customs official arrived to say that German motorized troops had left Rodange in the direction of the frontier. The Grand Duchess took her place next to her husband and the Prince himself drove over the frontier, preceded by the cars of the Grand-Ducal suite and followed by that of the Dowager Grand Duchess. The French frontier was at that moment guarded only by a few customs officials and the first French troops were met at Long-la-ville, on the road near the advanced fortifications of the Maginot line.

After many mishaps, the Sovereign and the Government met at Longwy. The Grand-Ducal children were also able to join the party in the evening at Ste. Menebould on the road to Paris. They had a narrow escape before leaving Luxembourg when their car was held up by German machine gunners and their driver drove straight at them with great dash and scattered the Germans. Shortly before, when the A.D.C. had his last telephonic contact with the capital, elements of the fifth column tried to lure the Hereditary Grand Duke back to the palace, by giving deliberately false information about a return of the Grand Duchess.

In the early morning, the Chargé d'Affaires of Luxembourg in Berlin was urged to come to the German Foreign Office, where he was handed a memorandum on the German invasion.

At 7 o'clock the German Minister at Luxembourg presented himself at the Government offices asking to see the Foreign Minister, for whom he had a memorandum from the German Government. The Secretary-General, M. Wehrer, received him and accepted his memorandum in the absence of his Minister.

GERMAN MEMORANDUM TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LUXEMBOURG, MAY 10, 1940.

"The Government of the Reich has trustworthy information that England and France have decided to follow their policy of spreading the war by launching in the near future an attack against Germany through Belgian and Dutch territory.

"Belgium and the Netherlands have already been for a long time secretly on the side of Germany's enemies, which constitutes a breach of their neutrality; they do not only want not to prevent this attack but actually favour it. The facts which prove this are established in detail in a memorandum which will be handed over to the Royal Belgian and the Royal Dutch Governments and of which a copy is added here. German troops have now been ordered to assure the neutrality of the two countries by all the force at their disposal in order to counteract the impending attack.

"The offensive decided upon by France and Britain in agreement with Belgium and Holland will also include the territory of the Luxembourg State. In consequence, the Government of the Reich

is forced to extend to Luxembourg territory the military operations started upon, in order to oppose the attack.

"The Grand-Ducal Government is aware that the Government of the Reich was prepared to respect the neutrality and integrity of Luxembourg providing that other neighbour countries would do the same. Negotiations in view of such agreements between the interested Powers seemed almost to reach conclusion in summer, 1939, when France discontinued them. The breaking-off of the negotiations by France can now be explained by the military decisions which she has now taken jointly with Germany's other enemies and they need no further comment.

"The Government of the Reich expects that the Grand-Ducal Government will now take account of the sole guilt of Germany's enemies in creating this situation and take the necessary measures to render impossible any hindrance of the German action by the Luxembourg population. The Government of the Reich, for their part, assure the Grand-Ducal Government of Luxembourg that Germany has no intention of violating the territorial integrity and the political independence of the Grand-Duchy by her measures, either now or in future."

A further clause stated that the German Reich guaranteed the European as well as the overseas possessions of the Grand-Duchy. The latter, however, existed only in the imagination of the Germans.

The Secretary-General declared that, in the absence of the Government, he was not in a position to answer the German Note. He would try to get into contact with the Government. He felt, however, compelled to protest against the violation of Luxembourg neutrality, thus conforming himself to the well-known views of his Government.

The Parliament met on the afternoon of May 11th.

The Deputies remained standing while the President delivered an address in which he stated that the country had been occupied by the German Army. The representatives of the Luxembourg people would consider it their duty to protest against this violation of Luxembourg's territory and of the country's neutrality.

By their applause the Deputies showed their full agreement.

"The country," continued M. Reuter, "has always respected its international engagements and obligations and will continue to do so. The Chamber of Deputies directs to the Sovereign the expression of their high esteem and devotion!"

The manifestation ended in general applause and was concluded by acclamations, in which the whole House joined, of:

"Vive la Grande Duchesse! Vive le Luxembourg libre et indépendant!"

CHAPTER 7

THE ATTITUDE OF SOVEREIGN AND GOVERNMENT

THE Grand Duchess and her Government had decided to leave the country as they desired to fight for its independence and avoid any possible appearance of collaboration with the invader by staying on in the occupied country. Honour and duty clearly marked the path to be followed. The country's only chance of salvation was from outside. The attitude of the theorists of National Socialism had left no doubt, since the advent of Hitler, of the fate which the Third Reich reserved for Luxembourg. The Führer's historians continually claimed the country in accordance with their racial theory and the pretended ties which, they insisted, had united their country with Luxembourg in the past. National Socialism represented the negation of all the Luxembourg people held dear. The simultaneous presence of Sovereign and Government of one of the most free and democratic countries of Europe with the German invader and oppressor would have been exploited by the lying German propaganda and might have given to the world an appearance of complicity. Fidelity to the very principles which were menaced by the German aggressor left only one way open: the painful road of exile, at the end of which the victory of Britain and her Allies would restore the independence of Luxembourg.

There were circumstances in which Governments were forced to take courageous decisions which the people, still stunned by the shock of their misfortunes, might fail to recognize at once as necessary for their own good. The departure of the Grand-Ducal family and of the Government did not, in the beginning, meet with the unanimous approval of the Luxembourg people, left necessarily in ignorance of the planned departure. Only when the invader unmasked himself and showed in all their brutality the hideous features of a conqueror, did the people of Luxembourg understand. Since then they have blessed the Sovereign for her decision to continue the struggle outside Luxembourg, and her activity, side by side with the Allies, which will save the country.

At about 9 a.m. on May 10th, 1940, the Luxembourg Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, M. Fonck, was received at the Quai d'Orsay by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, M. Champetier de Ribes, and applied, on behalf of his Government, for help. The French Government promised all assistance in its power.

On the same day the Luxembourg Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels made similar representations to the British Ambassador, Sir Lancelot Oliphant, who was accredited Minister to the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg.

THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO THE LUXEMBOURG GOVERNMENT,
Brussels, May 12th, 1940:

"I have the honour to inform you that I referred your note of May 10th to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who has instructed me to reply that in response to the appeal of the Luxembourg Government, H.M. Government in the United Kingdom will, in association with the Government of the French Republic, come to the aid of Luxembourg with all the forces at their command."

THE LUXEMBOURG CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES TO THE FRENCH MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Paris, May 10th, 1940.

"Monsieur le Président,

"Under instructions from my Government I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that German troops have this night entered the territory of the Grand-Duchy, in spite of the promise given by the Reich before the beginning of hostilities to respect the inviolability of the Grand-Duchy. These facts constitute a flagrant attack on the inviolability of Luxembourg and a violation of the neutrality of the Grand-Duchy which was guaranteed by the Treaties of London of 1839 and 1867.

"The Luxembourg Government has protested energetically, but without result, against this aggression.

"Having been disarmed by the Treaty of London of 1867 and lacking all means of self-defence, the Grand Duchy appeals for the assistance of France, her guarantor, for the protection of the population and the restoration of the independence and integrity of Luxembourg."

The Luxembourg Minister of Foreign Affairs had, at 5 a.m. on May 10th, informed by telephone the American Ambassador in Brussels, who was accredited Minister to the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, of the invasion.

KING GEORGE VI TO THE GRAND DUCHESS OF LUXEMBOURG,
Buckingham Palace, May 11th, 1940:

"The news of the brutal and wholly unwarranted German invasion of Your Royal Highness's country has deeply shocked me. The action is a flagrant breach of international law and of solemn undertakings. With no warning the neutrality so strictly observed by Luxembourg since the outbreak of the war has been outraged. I wish to express to Your Royal Highness my disgust at this crime, and in these days of anxiety and distress to convey to Your Royal Highness and to all your people my profound sympathy for your country. George R.I."

THE PRESIDENT OF FRANCE TO THE GRAND DUCHESS,
Paris, May 11th, 1940 :

"At the moment of the German Army's cowardly attack upon a country without defence, invading the territory of the Grand-Duchy, I address to Your Royal Highness the expression of my respectful sympathy and of my absolute confidence in the victory of a cause to which France and Luxembourg are now equally attached. Albert Lebrun."

HIS HOLINESS, THE POPE, TO THE GRAND DUCHESS OF LUXEMBOURG,
Vatican, May 11th, 1940 :

"At this sorrowful moment when the people of Luxembourg, in spite of their love of peace, find themselves surrounded by the tempest of war, our heart is nearer to them and we implore their heavenly patroness for help and protection that they may live in liberty and independence. We grant to Your Royal Highness and her faithful subjects our apostolic benediction."

From May 10th the seat of the Government of the Grand-Duchy was established in the Luxembourg Legation in Paris and permanent contact was created with the French Government. State and local authorities, as well as the whole French population, received the Luxembourgers cordially and gave them every possible assistance.

One of the first duties of the Luxembourg Government was the care of the 60,000 refugees who had left the districts in the south of their country, adjoining French territory, where, on May 10th and the days following, heavy fighting took place. These refugees had to be registered, accommodated, fed, and cared for, and, most important, work had to be found for them as soon as possible. All this had to be arranged with the collaboration of the French authorities.

Thousands of industrial workers found employment at the Creusot, and other factories. The Luxembourg Ministers of Labour, M. Krier, and of Justice, M. Bodson, organized these services.

The refugees had mostly been evacuated to the Departments of Côte-d'Or, Saône-et-Loire, and Hérault, and many of them wanted to fight. The organization of a Luxembourg Legion was consequently undertaken. The idea was to recruit, on a voluntary basis, sufficient men to constitute a fighting unit under the Luxembourg flag, containing as many Luxembourg cadres as possible and placed under French High Command.

An enlistment centre was opened in Paris and in other towns about May 20th, 1940. These centres started to function with good results. By June 15th, 1940, more than two thousand Luxembourgers had enrolled, a figure which would have increased considerably had not the Franco-German armistice put an end to this enterprise.

A few days before the armistice the French Government, which had placed at the disposal of the Grand Duchess a residence in the South of

France, informed her that they could no longer guarantee her safety on French soil. On June 18th the Sovereign, her family, and the members of her Government left France by the bridge of Irun. After a few days spent at San Sebastian, they crossed the Portuguese frontier and established themselves temporarily in Portugal, where the authorities, in receiving them cordially, requested them to refrain from all political activities.

Soon afterwards the Prince of Luxembourg, accompanied by the Grand-Ducal children, left Lisbon in an American man-of-war, put at his disposal by the Government of the U.S.A. The Prince had been guest at the White House a few months before the outbreak of war, and when he arrived in the United States in July, 1940, he was hospitably received by the President.

In August the Grand Duchess went to London, where her Foreign Minister had preceded her. An official protest against the German invasion had been impossible hitherto on account of the silence imposed upon the Grand-Ducal Government during their sojourn in Spain and Portugal.

From London, where it was easier to obtain information on events in Luxembourg, a Note of protest was dispatched to all the allied and neutral countries by the intermediary of the Grand-Ducal representative in Washington:

"In violation of the assurance at the outbreak of war to respect the integrity and neutrality of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, the Reich invaded and occupied by her troops the Grand-Duchy during the night of the 9th to 10th of May. The Grand Duchess and her Government left the country as a protest against this act of violence and in order to remove their activities from the pressure of the invader and to be able to defend in liberty and with free countries the interests of their own.

"Before leaving, the Government instructed the administrative authorities of Luxembourg who were remaining in the country so as to ensure the continuity of civil administration during the military occupation. These measures were in accordance with international law.

"The measures decreed since the 10th of May for the administration of the Grand-Duchy soon showed the real intentions of the Reich towards this country. A few days after the invasion, the country was declared enemy territory and after a short transitional period the military administration was replaced by a Gauleiter. This Gauleiter entered the town of Luxembourg at the head of troops of German police. He proclaimed in a speech made on this occasion that the Luxembourg population was in fact of a German character. Little by little the Gauleiter suppressed the use of the French language, which for generations has been the official language of the country. He imposed the exclusive use of the German tongue. He declared the Constitution abolished and officials released from their oath of loyalty to the Grand Duchess. He forbade the use of the terms 'Grand-Duchy' and 'Country of Luxembourg.'

"The Grand Duchess and her Government protest solemnly against these actions, which violate international law and the treaties and promises given by Germany. They will never recognize their validity.

"Never in any way in the past or in the present has the attitude of the Grand Duchess, of the Grand-Ducal Government, or the attitude of the people of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg given the slightest justification for this gross injustice committed by the Reich towards a little country wishing to live at peace with its neighbours.

"The authorities of the Reich have done all in their power since May 10th to prevent the Grand Duchess and the Grand-Ducal Government from establishing contact with the population of Luxembourg. Nevertheless, in raising this protest, the Grand Duchess and her Government know that they are acting in complete agreement of the people of Luxembourg, who, were they free to demonstrate their feelings, could not fail to display their wish to remain free and independent, as they were proud to do one year ago, when with unanimous enthusiasm they celebrated the independence of the Grand-Duchy."

On October 3rd, 1940, the Grand Duchess, accompanied by her eighty-years-old mother, flew to New York.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Labour established themselves permanently in London, whilst the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice went to Canada, where the Grand-Ducal family also took up temporary residence. From Montreal they were able to pay repeated visits to the White House and to President Roosevelt's family seat, Hyde Park, during which visits the President's sympathy greatly encouraged the Sovereign to continue her fight for her country's freedom.

On the occasion when the new Luxembourg Minister presented his credentials at Washington, on November 8th, 1940, President Roosevelt said:

"M. Minister: It is a pleasure to receive from your hands the letters of Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg accrediting you near the Government of the United States of America as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

"The people of the United States cherish the friendship of the people of Luxembourg whose sentiments you have just expressed. They realize fully that your country is now passing through a tragic hour. I hope the people of Luxembourg will take comfort in knowing that this nation desires nothing more than that they be re-established in their Freedom, Prosperity, and Happiness.

"You may count upon the full co-operation of myself and the competent officers of the Government of the United States in your efforts to strengthen the bonds between our two countries."

The Luxembourg Foreign Minister, M. Bech, had meanwhile established close contact and collaboration with the British and Allied Govern-

ments. The B.B.C. provided facilities for regular broadcasts, enabling the Grand Duchess and her Ministers to speak to their oppressed people in their own language. The moral effect of this contact was tremendous. After months of silence these words of comfort, hope and encouragement helped to stiffen the resistance of the Luxembourgers. And the voices of Englishmen such as Cardinal Hinsley and Mr. Anthony Eden added their weight to the effort of counteracting German propaganda in the Grand-Duchy.

Mr. Eden, on December 31st, 1940, addressed the following message to the people of Luxembourg:

"On being entrusted with the conduct of the Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, I want to take the opportunity of sending you a message of good will and encouragement for 1941. This last year has been for you full of tribulations and sufferings. The brutal and unprovoked attack of the German armies overwhelmed your defenceless country. You are now systematically despoiled by the occupying forces and your food and your materials are being in large measure removed.

"Do not despair. The hour of deliverance will strike. The British people, who themselves are suffering many trials and who live their lives under peril of indiscriminate bombardment from the air, are supremely confident of victory. Your Government is associated with ours in the struggle.

"There will be more trials to endure; but the British people, with your fellow-countrymen who are still at liberty, will come to your aid. Therefore hold firm. Keep alive the spirit of freedom, your national thought and feeling, and your resistance to the threats or the blandishments of the enemy."

And Cardinal Hinsley, in an Easter message, also addressed himself to the Luxembourgers, adding that he felt certain that their own Bishop would have spoken to them in the same way had he been free to do so:

"May the blessing of our risen Lord, which He gave to His disciples, when He appeared to them after His triumph over the death and darkness of Calvary, rest upon all you his faithful followers, in your country for the moment invaded and oppressed: 'Peace be with you!'

"The peace of Christ can neither be given nor taken away by the forces of evil. Right must triumph over might. Though the hour is dark the light already dawns. Not far distant is the full day of deliverance when the life and independence of Luxembourg will be restored and secured. Our strength is in the justice of the cause of Christian freedom."

In February, 1941, the Luxembourg Government thought that the time had come to denounce certain aspects of the sinister work of the German Gauleiter in Luxembourg. Great efforts had been made by the Nazi administration to obtain by blackmail and force the signatures of some of the Luxembourg people for an appeal to "go back to the Reich."

In a Note sent to the diplomatic representatives accredited in London, they exposed the cunning ruses and the brutal methods of the Führer's deputy in Luxembourg:

"The Grand-Ducal Government in a Note, forwarded at the beginning of last September by its Legation in Washington to the Allied and neutral Governments, had the honour to set forth the measures taken by the authorities of the Reich in the Grand-Duchy after its invasion by German troops.

"All these measures aimed at the annexation of the country by Germany. Since this time the intention to incorporate the Grand-Duchy in the Reich has been openly proclaimed by the German Gauleiter, who, after abolishing the Constitution of the country and dissolving the Chamber of Deputies and the State Council, has just dismissed the administrative commission which administered the country since the departure of the Grand-Ducal Government.

"The public services of Luxembourgers are more and more eliminated from the administration of the country, and the high functionaries of Luxembourg are replaced by German National Socialists.

"Since his arrival in the country the Gauleiter has boasted that he would bring the Führer a spontaneous adhesion of the Luxembourg population to the Reich. His scheme, based upon a propaganda without restraint, has failed in the face of the calm but stubborn resistance of the Luxembourg people.

"This failure has provoked a regime of economic pressure and of terroristic measures in Luxembourg aiming at a forced inclusion of the Luxembourgers into the 'Volksdeutsche Bewegung' (German People's Movement) by the signing of a manifesto called 'Heim ins Reich' (Back to the Reich). The German People's Movement is nothing but the camouflaged organization of the National Socialist Party imported into the country after the invasion.

"State and Communal functionaries are asked to give proofs of their political zeal and to collaborate actively for the incorporation of their fatherland into the Reich if they want to avoid the penalty of dismissal. To obtain this purpose the Germans ruthlessly apply to each category of Luxembourg citizens the form of constraint they think best fitted to break their resistance.

"The Grand-Ducal Government wishes to attract the attention of the Governments of the free countries to this situation, denouncing beforehand the factitious character of any result obtained by such coercive measures.

"From the most various sources, the Luxembourg Government receives irrefutable testimonies that the Luxembourg people remain profoundly attached to its independence and its dynasty.

"In the moral as well as material distress into which the invader has thrown them, the Luxembourgers put all their hopes in a victory of Right and Justice.

"JOSEPH BECH,"

When a year had gone by since the invasion of Luxembourg, Mr. Churchill sent a message to the Luxembourg Foreign Minister:

"On the anniversary of the day when the barbarous German hordes overran the territory of the Grand-Duchy in violation of their solemn oath, I desire to express to Your Excellency the sympathy and consideration of His Majesty's Government and of the British people for the peaceful and industrious people of the Grand-Duchy once again so cruelly subjected to the tyranny of a foreign aggressor.

"The unfaltering gallantry and endurance which Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess, her Royal Highness's Government and the whole people of Luxembourg have displayed since that dark day has given encouragement and support to the Allied cause."

The Luxembourg Foreign Minister answered, thanking the British Prime Minister, "for his encouraging words of recognition on the anniversary of the treacherous and wanton invasion of our small, peaceful, liberty-loving country. Steadfastly withstanding," he continued, "the most ruthless Nazi oppression, the Luxembourg people remain loyal to the ideals of freedom and justice. Full of admiration and gratitude for Great Britain we are proud to be associated with her in the struggle to the extent of our capacity. Nothing could more strengthen the spirit of resistance of our people and their confidence in the victory of the Allied cause and the restoration of that independence, than the message from the great leader in the battle against Nazi tyranny and domination."

Grand Duchess Charlotte, on this same May 10th, 1941, in a broadcast to the people of Great Britain and the British Commonwealth of Nations, said:

"My heartfelt thanks go out to you who have given me sanctuary and enabled me and my Government to continue to work for the liberation of my country and my people from the cruel yoke of the German oppressors. The magnificent heroism, the spirit of sacrifice and the endurance with which the British people are fighting tyranny are beyond praise. I trust in the fulfilment of British aims to create world security based upon Christian principles and the fundamental ideals of the British Commonwealth where Might is not Right and the Liberties and Rights of the smaller peoples are equally respected with those of the great."

The work on which the Allied Governments were jointly engaged was discussed at a solemn reunion which brought together their representatives in St. James's Palace, where King George VI met them.

The Luxembourg Prime Minister, M. Dupong, and Foreign Minister Bech were present and the former addressed the assembly in a speech in which he said that he was happy to associate the Luxembourg Government and his country fully in this pact of solidarity during the war and of collaboration in time of peace.

"Strong in its rights but fully conscious of its material weakness," he said, "the Luxembourg Government is all the readier to pay tribute to the war and peace aims defined in this draft resolution. During the war we all fight together, strong and weak, until the victory of justice over brutal force, represented by the German aggressor and his associates. After the war the co-operation of free peoples, great and small, will create in Europe and in the world, a new order of economic and social security.

"The Luxembourg people remain passionately loyal to the Sovereign, to their liberties, and to their independence.

"More than ever their eyes, full of admiration, return toward this island and towards the heroic British people upon whom hangs the fate of humanity."

And the representatives of the Luxembourg Government wholeheartedly approved the resolution adopted by the Allied conference:

"The Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, the Government of Belgium, the provisional Czechoslovak Government, the Governments of Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and Yugoslavia, and the representatives of General de Gaulle, leader of Free Frenchmen, engaged together in the fight against aggression, are resolved:

"That they will continue the struggle against German or Italian oppression until victory is won and will mutually assist each other in this struggle to the utmost of their respective capacity.

"There can be no settled peace and prosperity so long as free peoples are coerced by violence into submission to domination by Germany or her associates, or live under the threat under such coercion.

"That the only true basis of enduring peace is the willing co-operation of free peoples in a world in which, relieved of the menace of aggression, all may enjoy economic and social security; and that it is their intention to work together; and with other free peoples, both in war and peace to this end."

Returning from his historical meeting with President Roosevelt which gave rise to the Atlantic Charter, at the end of August, 1941, the British Prime Minister, in a message to the Allies, paid also tribute to "the tough, stout-hearted Luxembourgers" and exhorted them to pursue their struggle. When, a few weeks later, on September 24th, a second inter-allied meeting was held in London at St. James's Palace, the Atlantic Charter was wholeheartedly approved by the whole assembly. The Foreign Minister of Luxembourg addressed the Delegates:

"In the name of the Luxembourg Government," he said, "I give my thankful adherence to the declaration on the common principles of a peace settlement which the Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt have given to the world.



German troops entering the frontier town of Echternach at 4.50 a.m. on May 10, 1940

"In that remote Atlantic bay the two illustrious leaders of democracy have set alight a beacon of hope and guidance through the dark days brought upon the world by German fraud and force.

"To-day the whole world knows that the great English-speaking democracies are jointly pledged to the final destruction of Nazi tyranny with the assurance of a better world built to the standards laid down in the Atlantic Charter.

"To the oppressed peoples the declaration has brought renewed encouragement in their resistance; to all peoples a cause worth every sacrifice.

"Would it be pretentious for me to underline the unselfishness of this cause by reference to my own people?

"At the very moment that the Germans have abolished Luxembourg's independence and are persecuting our loyal people for their stubborn resistance, the historic Rights of Europe's smallest democracy—whose material contribution to victory is, of course, very limited—here find disinterested recognition in the principle that the Right must prevail against Might.

"Someone referring to what remained unsaid in the joined declaration has compared it to an Atlantic iceberg of which the bulk remains submerged. Truly, the declaration is supported by the immense underlying strength of the spiritual and moral values upon which our civilization is founded and against which Hitler's inhuman regime cannot prevail."

The Foreign Minister of Luxembourg declared Luxembourg's adherence. In supporting the economic plans of the Conference he welcomed the spirit underlying the proposed measures.

"It is only in this spirit," he said, "of close international economic collaboration that the post-war recovery of a convalescent Europe will be realized."

American interest in the Grand-Duchy and its struggle for freedom did not diminish and, besides the hospitality shown personally by the President to the Grand-Ducal family, there were many occasions when sympathy for Luxembourg was manifested by outstanding American personalities. The Assistant Secretary of State, U.S.A., the Hon. Adolph A. Berle, said at a reception at the Luxembourg Legation in August, 1941:

"We meet to-day in the hospitality of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, a State which through the endless changes of European history has given an example of devotion to freedom and independence. Let it stand as a symbol of the small nations which have mightily contributed to the life of Europe.

"Though this small country is to-day submerged by irresistible force, we know beyond question that the processes of force can create no lasting result. Though its civilian population is literally enslaved, its mind and heart will not and cannot be broken.

"An invading army has seized its territory. A conqueror, claiming to establish a 'new order,' has put its young men at forced labour; and has taken its girls from their homes, has forced them into German industry, and proposes to make them, if possible, mothers of alien children. This is the grim reality behind fine phrases about 'new order.'"

"Yet there is no shadow of doubt that the nations of Europe and the people of Europe, great and small, wait only for the opportunity to break the chains of this temporary barbarism and to re-establish the laws and customs of civilization."

"My Government is happy in the knowledge that the lot of the people of Luxembourg has been in some slight degree alleviated by the representative there of the foreign service of the United States."

"It is the plan of this Government, when the tide of barbarity shall be rolled back, to turn the full measure of its economic strength to bringing help, relief, and sustenance to the tens of millions of families in many countries who are now hungry, cold, homeless, sick, separated, or in prison by the ruthless act of a group of tyrants."

"Out of the shadows there emerge the outlines of the world to come. In it, small nations will be able to live in freedom and in peace, in a family of nations, ruled by law which respects the rights of the weak as well as the strong. The basis of existence must be national. But necessary condition must be a general accord under which all countries are assured of participation in the economic life of the world and under which all races are assured the right to live in conditions of equality and self-respect."

"Modern life has provided the tools, the capacity, and the transport which can assure freedom from want. It has created the communications which can guarantee freedom of the information and of science. It can and must create the law which gives freedom from fear."

"In the day of reconstruction the voices of those who suffer now will not be forgotten. We are bold to think that the sorrow of the present is the prelude to a coming age more secure, more brilliant, more gracious, and more free than any we have seen."

The American Chargé d'Affaires to Luxembourg, Mr. Platt Waller, who had just returned from the Grand-Duchy, added his story to the words of the Secretary of State :

"When I recall," he said, "the glories of the soul which have blossomed under the ploughshare of adversity, I am uplifted and edified by the example of the patriotism burning in each Luxembourg breast and I feel that this suffering has not been in vain and that her subjects, always loving her and cherishing the Grand Duchess's sacred person as the symbol of their independence and the incarnation of their national unity, now feel for their Sovereign a passionate affection verging on the mystical, a dynamic devotion such as has never before animated a people. I need but cite the message which I was entrusted to bring her: 'Tell our Sovereign that we remain steadfast; tell her that we thank God that she is safe and is guarding the flame of our

independence on a national altar across the seas. Tell her that we will not allow her foot to touch the ground when she returns with our liberty and happiness. Say unto her that we will carry her on our shoulders from Rodange to Luxembourg."

"Another message, delivered to me at great peril, scarce three weeks ago, says textually: 'Before quitting our dear country, I beseech Your Excellency, in the name of all the Luxembourgers, true to their democracy, and above all, loyal unto death to Her Royal Highness, her family, and her Government, that in spite of all the vicissitudes and the persecution wreaked upon us by the oppressor, we will ever remain faithful and true. Be our interpreter near your great President, to thank him for the moral support with which he has armed us and fortified us in unstinted measure up to this day. Thank him whom we consider our liberator-to-be. To this great man, and to the American nation, all our thanks, all our sympathy. Useless to talk here of our sufferings. Your Excellency knows them better than anyone else.'"

He concluded :

"I share the love and trust of a noble people, their hopes and fears were mine. If the people of Luxembourg are in the valley of the shadow, if the sunlight of liberty and independence has been taken from them, nevertheless, they wait in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection."

Part Three

LUXEMBOURG UNDER THE NAZI HEEL

CHAPTER 8

GERMAN ADMINISTRATION

ONE fact emerges clearly from all the documentary evidence on the Nazi rule in the Grand-Duchy: the Luxembourgers have not yielded to the efforts of their temporary masters to establish a permanent hold on the country. All the early attempts to cajole them into a realization of the advantages of belonging to the "Herrenvolk" have failed. And the Germans have been no more successful when subsequently they tried, by torture and blackmail, to force them to renounce all that they cherish most dearly.

When, on May 10th, 1941, the German Army crossed the frontiers into the Grand-Duchy, the invader evidently had some hope that the Luxembourgers, their Sovereign, and Government would submit to an occupation as they had done—although under protest and without any co-operation—during the first World War. They knew well enough that no resistance was to be expected, as the Grand-Duchy under the existing and well-known international treaties was neutralized and disarmed. Luxembourg had been empowered to retain in the capital only "the number of troops necessary to provide for the maintenance of good order."

When the Government had to leave the country, a number of Government officials took charge of current affairs by setting up an administrative commission. Its powers were strictly limited to routine administration. As no authorized agent may, of his own accord, extend the powers delegated to him, this commission never possessed any legislative power of any kind. International law provides for the creation of such temporary bodies, intended only to prevent the disruption of civic services.

The head of this commission declared their willingness to do everything necessary to maintain order and carry on with ordinary affairs. But not many days elapsed before the invader entered into conflict with the Administrative Commission and its powers, already so limited, were further curtailed by the Nazis.

Even before the Administrative Commission was dissolved and its chairman imprisoned somewhere in Germany, all the other representative bodies of the Grand-Duchy had been rendered powerless. The Chamber

of Deputies—which had given in August, 1939, full legislative powers to the Government—met a few times in the beginning of the occupation in order to examine administrative problems jointly with the Commission and to give to several important decisions the backing of its moral authority. These decisions concerned vital issues on which the Government had prepared and presented bills prior to its departure. At the beginning of November, 1940, the mandates of twenty-nine out of a total of fifty-five Deputies came to an end. Since more than half of the seats were vacant and since it was both legally and practically impossible to hold a new election, a valid chamber no longer existed. Even if the occupying authorities had permitted the Chamber to meet, it would have been constitutionally unable to do so. The Germans, however, soon realized that the Chamber, the Administrative Commission and the whole country remained loyal to Sovereign and Government and, before the date of its natural demise, they decided to prohibit Parliament and State Council.

The first measures taken by the Germans were the requisitioning of food, fuel, and any other commodities. German soldiers, abundantly provided with "occupation marks" or *Reichskreditenkassenscheine* (soon derisively called "monkey money"), completed this work of despoiling the Luxembourg larder. The great Luxembourg steel works were taken over entirely by the invader and soon the administration of these companies was in the hands of well-known German industrialists.

On the other hand, the Germans have their own ways of making things look as if normal life continued. They even try to increase the number of "social events." This attitude is obviously dictated by propaganda motives and not by any philanthropic desire to make life more pleasant. German theatrical companies arrived from the Reich in great number and the Luxembourgers were invited to relive the disconsolate scenes of the war by seeing the film "Victory in the West." On many occasions numbered tickets were sent to all the governmental and civic officials. This procedure served two purposes: firstly, it was intended to fill the empty theatre and, secondly, to give the illusion of a moral support from men in authority whose presence or absence could be easily checked by this method. All these psychological mistakes add to the bitter feelings of the Luxembourgers.

Gradually the Germans took over everything in the Grand-Duchy: police, administration, justice. While international law gives the occupying power only administrative and police rights, the Germans soon showed that they had no intention of respecting these limits. There was no power to prevent them from enforcing whatever laws and regulations they wished to set up.

Immediately following the occupation of the Grand-Duchy the Germans installed a military administration. A *Feldkommandantur* was instituted and shortly afterwards an *Oberfeldkommandantur*. These two bodies were established in the administrative building of the great steel concern "Arbed." For the first few weeks General Gullmann was in charge of the *Feldkommandantur* and General Schumacher in charge of the *Oberfeldkommandantur*.

Early in August, 1940, the *Feldkommandantur* disappeared and was replaced by a *Stadtkommandantur*. Colonel Schmidt, soon promoted to the rank of Major-General, was in charge of this office. When the *Feldkommandantur* left, the military announced to all and sundry that the good times were over for Luxembourg and that the "Civil Administration" which would follow them was far from pleasant. During the first period of military regime there had been a secret Field Police working together with the *Feldkommandantur*, and these police seemed mainly interested in spies or people suspected of espionage.

Civil Administration

On August 7th, 1940, a German Civil Administration was established in the Grand-Duchy. The Gauleiter of the Gau Koblenz-Trier, Gustav Simon, was appointed its chief. From this day he—directly responsible to the Chancellor Hitler—organized a complete German administration, replacing many of the remaining Luxembourg officials by Germans and placing minor officials entirely under German control. The chiefs of the higher administrations were replaced by twice their number of German officials. Some of the Luxembourg Civil Servants, deprived of their office, were sent to Germany to undergo "re-educational training."

Irritated by the manifestation of French culture which he saw about him, Hitler's Gauleiter began his administration of the Grand-Duchy by outlawing the use of the official language, French, in the schools, the Press, the administration, the naming of streets and stores, in the courts and—even in private conversation. But this introduction of German *Kultur* affords sufficient material for a separate chapter.

With the new administrations, the German police was introduced in order to ensure the enforcement of all the new regulations. The Gestapo installed itself in the "Villa Pauly" (called the Villa of Tortures), in the town of Luxembourg. The number of police agents grew enormously.

Shortly afterwards the German Gauleiter declared the Constitution of the Grand-Duchy abolished, the oath of allegiance to the Sovereign null, while the political parties were prohibited. The deputy of the Führer had to recognize in a public speech that he had been warned "by more than one that his task to win over the Luxembourg population to the Nazi cause would be a hopeless one." He flattered himself, however, that he would eventually succeed. He imagined that the V.D.B. (the *Volks-Deutsche Bewegung*) and its propaganda for the "return to the Reich" would bring about the acceptance of German rule by the Luxembourgers.

Physical and moral pressure was brought to bear on all sections of the Luxembourg population to sign a manifesto expressing their desire to be incorporated into Germany. In February, 1941, the *de facto* inclusion into the German Gau *Moselland* was announced, although the formal "legal" annexation had at that time not been carried out. Thousands of Luxembourgers in prisons and concentration camps, in forced labour gangs, breaking stones on German roads, are paying heavily for their refusal to give their approval to such measures.

Volks-Deutsche Bewegung.

The German claim that the Luxembourgers belong to the Reich by ties of language and race is supported by the contention that they were separated from their fatherland only "by the intrigues of the Great Powers, by separatist plots and by the changing events of history." This distortion of the truth by the Gauleiter—so little in accordance with what Bismarck thought of the subject—has never been accepted by the Luxembourgers themselves.

"But now," he said, at the conclusion of one of his speeches, "the Luxembourgers want to return to the Reich!"

There is ample documentary evidence contradicting this statement. The Luxembourg Professor Kratzenberg—himself of German origin—was made leader of the *Volks-Deutsche Bewegung*. The Gauleiter, after having declared the Jews outlaws and having deprived them of their property, said that a similar fate awaited those Luxembourgers who would not "spontaneously" join the movement. But as even this undisguised menace failed to produce such "spontaneous adherences" he took matters in his own hands and started by alleging that the soldiers of the Luxembourg Volunteer Corps, the policemen and all the public officials had declared their adherence to the V.D.B. *en bloc*. All these people had to face the alternative: join or starve! Whoever protested was dismissed.

But this economic terror is still more far-reaching. The Germans had created a central Labour Office and this *Arbeits-Amt* of theirs was intended as the supreme regulator of the entire economic life in the Grand-Duchy. This office was alone authorized to grant permits of all kinds: for taking work as well as for employing labour; for obtaining raw materials as well as for retailing finished articles and goods; for the manufacture of merchandise as well as for import or export. Every imaginable branch of economic activity came within the scope of this organization. In order to be able to approach the *Arbeits-Amt* everyone has to be a member of the *Arbeits-Front*, including workers and business men, private employees and their employers. And finally, in order to become a member of the *Arbeits-Front*, one had to join the V.D.B. (*Volks-Deutsche Bewegung*).

As those who refused to join the V.D.B. consequently had not the slightest chance of entering either of the other organizations, they were totally unable to obtain work. But as the first principle of the German National Socialist theory is the obligation for everybody to work, those who found themselves without employment were sent to Germany to break stones on the roads. Lawyers, doctors, teachers were thus automatically deprived of their occupation, and when they refused to join the V.D.B. they risked not only the penalty of forced labour but exposed themselves to the danger of being entirely cut off from the economic life of their country. Even those materially able to take such risks cannot escape German terrorism and oppression: they are told that should they refuse to join they will have to leave the country as there is no place for them in German Luxembourg.

In spite of all this, the Germanization of the Grand-Duchy has made no progress. Whole groups of Civil Servants, of medical men, of law yers

were sent to Germany in order to take part in a National Socialist *Umschulungskurs*; but these Luxembourgers, far from returning as orthodox Nazis, gave the most extraordinary description of their Nazi "re-education." They had been put into uniforms, had to listen to lectures on Nazi philosophy and racial theories by half-educated instructors, and had to break stones on the roads. They thought that this experience was nothing but a grotesque farce.

The Gauleiter consequently had to change his tactics once again and to attempt the only measure able to transform the Grand-Duchy into a German province: a rigorous exchange of populations. To-day, hundreds of Luxembourg families have already been transplanted to Germany. They were, with well justified prudence, not sent in a group, but one family was settled in Stettin, another in Leipzig, and so on. Three thousand five hundred Luxembourg workers were sent to German factories, mostly in the Treves and Coblenz areas, whilst on the other hand German families—particularly those of their officials—took up residence in the Grand-Duchy. In this way the Germans are trying systematically to effect the colonization of the country.

The V.D.B. does not limit its efforts to *national* propaganda, but its purpose is doubtless a National Socialist one: its membership is the preparation for party membership. The V.D.B. praises the blessings of Nazi Germany, propagates the cult of the Führer, whose portrait must be displayed in all public places, offices and inns. Mass meetings are organized in the big public squares, where members have to appear to listen to the speeches of orators imported from Nazi Germany if they want to evade heavy penalties. The V.D.B. takes care that the houses of the neighbourhood show swastika flags. It introduces the Winter Hilfswerk, and one Sunday it is the turn of the doctors, the next one that of the judges, to go and beg for the German winter fund. Those who refuse to do so have to face the Special Court for their "anti-German attitude." In all the branches of public life German methods are the same. Whilst all the old associations and clubs, social, cultural, economic, are dissolved and their fortunes confiscated, the V.D.B. tries to absorb whatever may serve its purpose. So far, in spite of all their terrorist methods, they have gained no support in the country.

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Luxembourg Census.

The best example for this fact was given by the Luxembourgers on October 10th, 1941. At this date the Germans carried out a census of the population. The forms to be filled in and signed contained the usual references, surnames, Christian names, age, nationality, language, etc. Concerning one point a special order was issued that where German nationality did not apply, foreign nationalities could be indicated, such as Italian or French, but in no case could Luxembourg nationality be admitted. According to the Germans the latter no longer existed, and had in reality never existed.

The same applied in reference to the native tongue. The Luxembourg

language was excluded under the fallacious pretext that the Luxembourg dialect was only a branch of the German language.

The results were as follows :

In towns 96 per cent stated their nationality as Luxembourg, and their native tongue as Luxembourghish. In the country the proportion was 99 per cent.

This spontaneous plebiscite showed up clearly the complete failure of all the propaganda efforts, blackmail and oppression of the Germans, who promptly cancelled the validity of the census.

Since the plebiscite, the reign of terror has increased in fury. More than 8,000 patriots, including 2,500 from Luxembourg city alone, have been arrested, imprisoned or deported to concentration camps. More than 1,000 members of the League of Luxembourg Patriots were among those arrested, as well as all the members of the former French societies, Alliance Française, and others.

* * *

In a recent declaration, the Gauleiter Simon referred to his failure in the attempted plebiscite of October, 1941, and for the first time in his career at Luxembourg revealed the real foundations of the German claims to the Grand-Duchy.

Speaking to the workers of Rodange on May 2nd, 1942, he said:

"I shall not introduce compulsory service or Reich civil law surreptitiously. I have always used the gentleman's staircase and whatever I want I shall tell you direct. Luxembourg will never have a plebiscite to decide whether her people want to join the Reich. The decision was taken on May 10th, 1940, when German soldiers crossed the frontier and protected your country from destruction. On the day when the first grave for a German soldier-hero was dug we made the following decision: "This land was won and will be kept by German blood and therefore will remain German for all eternity."

This declaration of the Führer's Deputy of Luxembourg is the more surprising as it is in entire contradiction to all his earlier utterances, when he claimed the Grand-Duchy as "part of Greater Germany," the Luxembourgers as "brothers of German blood," and pretended that the annexation was the result of the Luxembourgers' natural wishes. After two years of pretence, he is forced to confess that the Grand-Duchy is but a conquered country and to recognize that the Luxembourgers' wishes will not be taken into consideration.

CHAPTER 9

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION AND GERMAN "KULTUR" IN LUXEMBOURG

LAST year in Luxembourg the Octave in honour of the Holy Virgin—one of the oldest religious traditions of the Grand-Duchy—provided a particularly moving spectacle, giving ample proof that Luxembourg religious resistance is not less stubborn or valiant than the ceaseless opposition which the German invader has to face in every other aspect of public life in the Grand-Duchy. Almost the entire population of Luxembourg is Roman Catholic.

By order of the German authorities, the usual ritual procession, in which the Sovereign and her family regularly took part, had been forbidden. The result of this interference with this time-honoured and much loved manifestation of their faith was quite contrary to German expectations. Gathered at the Cathedral and in the neighbourhood of this holy place of national pilgrimage, the Luxembourgers displayed such devotion to their religion that although no music, no choirs, none of the usual ritual was permitted, the assembled crowd manifested a greater fervour than ever before. A great assembly—men, women, and children—had come to seek and to find spiritual consolation at the altar and at the feet of the symbolic statue of the Consoler of the afflicted. Everywhere in the streets of the capital where the devout were gathered one could hear the prayer: "Mary, we pray to you and beg for your help." There was, according to eye-witnesses, so much distress in this prayer, so much hope and trust, that everyone was deeply moved by it. This emotion reached its climax when the people learned that the Bishop would be brought to the Cathedral to celebrate Mass by the U.S.A. Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Platt Waller. When the latter arrived in his car with the Bishop many thousands had assembled. A wave of cheering broke out: "Long live the Grand Duchess! Long live Luxembourg! Long live the U.S.A.! Long live the Bishop! And long live Mr. Platt Waller!"

This enthusiasm of the Luxembourgers at the sight of their Bishop is the more understandable in view of the various rumours which had been circulating concerning his fate. It had been reported that he had been arrested by the Germans, that he had been sent to Germany, that he had been confined to his house. Indeed, all this would have been quite consistent with the general attitude of the German invader, who had dissolved religious institutions, persecuted the clergy, and proclaimed everywhere that the Nazi faith was the only true religious principle.

The resistance of the Catholic priesthood in the face of every threat is magnificent. Nearly all of the highest church dignitaries are known to have been expelled to the South of France. There is some uncertainty as to the fate of the Vicar General, Mgr. Origer, who disappeared over a year ago.

The Episcopal Seminary has been dissolved and without notice priests have been herded into waiting vehicles to be driven to unknown destinations. All the religious congregations have been dissolved, including the famous Abbaye de Clervaux, whence the Benedictine Fathers have been transferred to Belgium. Nor have the Sisters of Mercy and other charitable Orders been spared, and it is expected that they will shortly be expelled from the hospitals, the only places where up to the present they have been permitted to work and where they have already been largely replaced by the so-called Nazi Brown Sisters.

Whilst religious ceremonies are being restricted there are instances of pagan worship. The wedding of the Nazi district leader of Luxembourg was celebrated with grotesque comedy according to pagan rites in the former Chamber of Deputies, which was profusely decorated with swastika flags.

The Redemptorist Fathers have been driven off to Germany and their property has been confiscated. With an hour's notice only, they were bundled into lorries and sent no one knew where. An officer's mess, where scenes of drunkenness are common, had been installed in a convent. The church is to be converted into a theatre. Meanwhile the German Press reports such incidents under the headlines: "Pagan Luxembourg expels its clergy!"

Several groups of the expelled priests have recently arrived in unoccupied France. Arrested in May, 1941, they were obliged to leave their institutions and to seek refuge in France. They were forced to surrender all their possessions to the Gestapo and one group of about two dozen priests were allowed to take with them only the equivalent of five pounds.

The Bishop's palace and his private residence have likewise been confiscated and Clervaux Abbaye has been converted into an Adolf Hitler school.

The situation of the Luxembourg Jews is tragic. In the first place, most Jewish property has been confiscated and the people have been deported or sent to labour camps across the frontiers. Gangs of soldiers broke into the Jewish temples with threats to the rabbi and his loyal followers to blow up his community with dynamite. The rabbi himself was savagely attacked. The synagogue was ordered to be demolished.

Quite recently two eminent Roman Catholic voices have attested to the trials of their flock in Luxembourg. The Belgian Primate, Cardinal van Roey, examining this situation, said:

"War is a crime and the occupation of a country is unjustified. One often hears it said that it matters little what a regime is; that the Church can adapt itself to all regimes. We must distinguish. The Church can adapt itself to different regimes provided that those

regimes safeguard liberty and do not violate consciences, allowing the Church full exercise of its powers.

"But how can the Church adapt itself to the regime at present imposed on the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, where seminarists are imprisoned and convents closed? No, the Church as a human organization can live in various climes and can adapt itself to varied conditions, but it can not live in climes and conditions that suffocate it."

Even a German Bishop, Mgr. Bornewasser of Trier, has recently criticized with much indignation the state of affairs in Luxembourg. After an official episcopal inspection of the diocese he declared publicly that the religious situation in the Grand-Duchy was still worse than anything he had imagined.

Despairing in their efforts to convert the older generation to the new pagan faith of Adolf Hitler, the invaders concentrate their attention to winning over the younger people to their ideas. The methods chosen for this purpose are of such a character that they not only create the greatest concern and anxiety in the parents, but also shock and bewilder the children. The aim is to create a youth movement on German lines. Boys and girls are forced to work in German labour camps, membership of the Hitler Youth is strictly compulsory. One can readily imagine the grief and anxiety of parents whose children are thus taken away for labour service in Germany, more especially as in all probability they have read the press announcements stating: "It will be an honour for the girls of Luxembourg to take part in the labour service and to be allowed to return as German mothers."

The Nazis concentrate their efforts on the very young children, trying to instil into them the conception that National Socialism is the creed of the young. The fine old castles—amongst them the Grand Ducal Palace—are handed over to them as schools and camps; games and sports are encouraged. The ideals of the older generations are ridiculed and parental authority largely abolished; the children must recognize only one master—the Third Reich.

In the primary schools French is entirely banished and the whole programme of instruction is greatly changed; there is less to learn in most branches, but the teaching of history in the true Nazi spirit takes up most of the children's time. The Germans think it is essential that children should start as young as possible to look at the world from a Nazi viewpoint.

The secondary schools are not at the disposal of the best qualified children, but favour those who show themselves most willing to accept Nazi theories. German history and gymnastics are the most important branches of learning in these schools.

All the text-books formerly used in the schools are confiscated and replaced by Nazi propaganda books, by Bibles stressing the mission of Nazidom, by history books advocating German world domination. The children surrender their former text-books only after they have cut out the pages with the portrait of their Grand Duchess. Many Luxembourg

teachers have been dismissed, many transferred to Germany, and many replaced by Germans.

The Gauleiter's statement proclaims the method: "Let there be no doubt that in the future no boy or girl will be permitted to set foot in any school unless he or she belongs to the Youth of the Führer! It would be intolerable that those who obtain special educational advantages at the cost of the Reich should be able to place their learning at the disposal of the enemy."

The German indifference to scholarship or adequate education is not concealed. It makes little difference—they say—how well or how poorly children learn so long as they are taught to say "Heil Hitler!" If parents take their children away from school, those over fourteen are sent to Germany and are placed in prisons or reformatory schools.

The German greeting, "*Heil Hitler!*" is compulsory, and to greet a friend with "*Bon jour*" or "*Bon soir*" has earned many a Luxembourger sentences of imprisonment. All French family names have been Germanized by decree.

Nobody is allowed to sit for examinations who has not been for at least six months an active member of the German Youth Movement. No one can be a teacher who has not "devoted heart and soul to the Reich and the German cause."

CHAPTER 10

THE INTRODUCTION OF GERMAN JUSTICE IN THE GRAND-DUCHY

FROM the beginning of the German Civil Administration, German law was introduced into the Grand-Duchy as part of the Gauleiter's campaign to Germanize the country and to prepare its annexation by the Reich. The deputy Führer in Luxembourg, Gustav Simon, concentrates, however, all the administrative power in his own person. There is no means of appeal against his decisions. And there is no detail small enough in the public, economic, and private life of the Luxembourgers to escape his interference. He made a display of orthodox Nazi sentiments when addressing the Luxembourgers. "You must support," he told them, "everything I decree and you must do so particularly when you do not understand why. I am sure you do not want the Greater Germany as a gift without sacrifices on your side!"

One of the first moves in Luxembourg—of great profit to the Nazi officials—was the confiscation of the property of the Grand Duchess and her Ministers, of Jews and emigrants, introduced by a whole series of high-sounding laws and regulations trying to give the impression that the "people" would profit by such measures. At the Grand Ducal Palace an exhibition of all the stolen pictures and antique furniture was organized. But no Luxembourger would consent to acquire these stolen goods offered for sale and consequently they were sent to Germany.

Loyal Luxembourgers, who tried to save some of the Grand Duchess's property from the greed of the invader, were accused and convicted of stealing.

The peaceful people of Luxembourg, accustomed to be ruled by clearly established laws, became more and more puzzled by the intricacies of the new system, by the appalling number of occasions when the hated word *verboten* appeared. This German preoccupation with the outward aspect of the law seemed to them the more extraordinary as the great majority of their punishments were carried out without even a sham court sitting: condemnations for hard labour were without term, transfers to concentration camps without either accusation or condemnations and without any right of appeal.

The Germans pride themselves on the translation of their civil and penal law codes from the rather complicated official language of former days to a more understandable and simpler modern German. But the word "justice" seems to stand for nothing in their system.

The powers of the Gestapo are unlimited. Alongside the Gestapo

there is the Schutzpolizei, the actual police. On the occasion of their establishment in August, 1940, the Gauleiter took the opportunity to outline in a speech the future regime of the country. The innumerable police agents sent to the Grand-Duchy were a good illustration of his real intentions: in all its history the country had never seen a police force so out of keeping with the size of Luxembourg.

Terror reigns in Luxembourg. The quarters of the Gestapo at the Villa Pauly and at other places are feared by the people. On certain occasions one could see in the corridors of these establishments whole queues of human beings, standing in rows with their faces towards the wall, while members of the Gestapo hit them over the head, crushing their faces against the stones. These offices all possess wireless sets and if extremely loud music is heard—which is often the case—one can be certain that it is to cover the cries of those being ill-treated and martyred during the interrogatories of the Nazi police. This is the true basis of German justice, and confessions extracted from their victims by means of torture form the evidence of their law courts. German rule forces everybody, furthermore, to spy continually upon his neighbour. These methods—and their remuneration—can be accepted only by the unscrupulous. Very often the people who are punished are victims of anonymous denunciations and are perfectly innocent of the crimes of which they are accused.

The creation of the "Special Court of the People," in which, it is unnecessary to emphasize, the people have no say and where often the most elementary forms of legal procedure are ignored, is an excellent illustration of Nazi justice. By the simple addition of the term "political" to anything they call a crime, the "Special Court" can bring under its jurisdiction any case whatsoever. Lawyers, imported from Germany, are only too eager to collaborate in this travesty of justice where the sacred rights of defence have become a farce. In a famous case where an obviously innocent Luxembourg official was tried, one of the German lawyers forced upon the accused to conduct his so-called defence was heard to plead: "I know that my client is guilty and I can but advise him eventually to make his complete confession. In that way he might become worthy of the tribunal's mercy!"

The "Special Court" passes sentences on Luxembourgers for asserting their patriotic feelings, listening to the B.B.C. broadcasts or demonstrating in any other way their hostility towards Germany. As an example, a fine of Rm. 500,000 has been imposed upon the town of Luxembourg, where German flags have been torn down and the "V" campaign was flourishing. Hostages were taken to guarantee payment of these fines.

Luxembourg resistance becomes more intense in the face of German savagery and it hits back in its turn. One of the rare Luxembourg quislings—a teacher named Thill, known for his pro-German propaganda efforts—was found with his head cut off. The authors of this act of popular justice could not be discovered. One young Luxembourger was sentenced to death and executed for having attempted the life of an official of the National Socialist Party.

All the members of the Luxembourg Bar who had, up till May 23rd,

1941, refused to associate themselves with the activities carried out by the Germans against the independence and the Constitution of the Grand-Duchy were condemned to forced labour. No trial was held, nor was there any formal accusation from the Gauleiter. And all these men, comprising many of the most distinguished members of the Bench and Bar, were notified in the morning that they would have to report at 2 p.m. the same day at the Labour Office in Luxembourg town, whence they would be deported to Germany to work on the roads.

The whole organization of the Courts of Luxembourg had to undergo fundamental changes. All the denominations were altered and the relatively simple forms, traditional in Luxembourg, were re-created on German models.

The High Court of Justice was abolished, but its framework is temporarily maintained and is functioning under the name of "Senate of the *Oberlandesgericht Köln*." The numerous changes of titles and names as well as the profusion of new decrees and laws are, incidentally, not only ridiculed by the Luxembourgers but by some of the German officials themselves.

There is ample matter for the German "justice" to deal with: anti-German utterances, refusal to collaborate with the German New Order, listening to foreign broadcasts (which means the legal Government's own transmissions from London), these are the crimes continually tried by infamous methods.

One of the most hideous features of this legal "system" which the Nazis have imposed on the Luxembourgers is that making the operation of their new "laws" retrospective. This barbaric idea delivers the entire population to the discretion of the inhuman judge. Numerous Luxembourgers are condemned for actions or opinions manifested before May 10th and which under the then existing law were not regarded as punishable crimes.

On April 19th, 1941, a decree of the German Civil Administration regulated the admission to the Bar. The text of the first paragraph states that the lawyer must be "a real adviser to his *Volksgenossen*," and explained "those who do not give sufficient guarantees that they will show everywhere their German sentiments can be temporarily or finally revoked." And whilst the Luxembourg magistrates and lawyers were breaking stones and doing forced labour on German roads, their profession was hypocritically honoured by the creation of an *Ehren-Gericht*, a Court of Honour. Another "privilege" of the master-race for those destined "to share as brothers the splendid destiny of Germany," but who preferred to pay for their own conception of honour and loyalty to their oath in the hell of concentration camps.